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SCENES AND SPORTS

IN

FOREIGN LANDS.

X. i. 18

ILLUSTRATED WITH

A SERIES OF DRAWINGS TAKEN FROM NATURE.

BY

MAJOR E. NAPIER,

45TH REGIMENT.

85053

"Seriously, that same *shooting* is a most barbarous amusement, only fit for *majors* in the army, and royal dukes, and that sort of people; the mere walking is bad enough, but embarrassing one's arms, moreover, with a gun, and one's legs with turnip tops—exposing oneself to the mercy of bad shots and the atrocity of gunpowder seems to me only a state of painful fatigue, enlivened by the probability of being killed."—*Sir S. L. Dulcet's Portfolio.*

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SCENES AND SPORTS

IN

FOREIGN LANDS.

CHAPTER I.

THE PERKHAL LAKE — THE STIRRUP CUP — SPORT IN THE JUNGLE — THE ELK — THE EAGLE — A PIC-NIC TIFFIN — LYING CHARLIE'S STORY OF THE CROCODILES — THE GOUNDUM PAGODA — THE STORM.

"A lake there was, with shelving banks around,
Whose verdant summit fragrant myrtles crown'd."

OVID.

"ROUSE up, my lads! or you'll have the tents about your ears!" was M—'s morning salutation; and the noise of the Lascars outside warned us that this prophecy would soon be fulfilled: therefore, without more delay than was required for a "privateer" wash, our traps were bundled

on, and a quarter of an hour saw us assembled in the small bichovah, or breakfast tent, where our morning cup of coffee already awaited us. Who that has ever campaigned in the East can forget the delights of that fragrant morning cup, followed, as you vault into the saddle at two or three o'clock in the morning, by the soothing companion, a cheroot, whose genial vapour renders innocuous the heavy mists of night still floating around, as you slowly pace along, wrapped up in your own thoughts and a warm boat-cloak—maybe occasionally nodding in the unconsciousness of a half nap over your saddle-bows—till the glorious sun, suddenly rising, dispels at once the shades of night and your own drowsiness!

As *our* campaign was one of pleasure, we had given a little more law to the drowsy god, and it was broad day-light when, sipping our coffee, we held a con-

sultation on the intended operations of the day. The shekarees (native hunters) who were to accompany us, wrapped up in their dark "cumlays," (a coarse brown blanket worn by the lower orders of natives,) squatted on their haunches, and leaning on their long matchlocks, had all the appearance of the dusky-looking figures of Hindoo mythology which adorn their pagodas and places of worship. One of these was the man who had brought us notice of the wild buffalo, and was altogether an intelligent fellow, spoke a little Hindostanee,* and professed to be perfectly well acquainted with the whole jungle between our present station and the Perkhal lake. He said we were cer-

* The Hindostanee is, properly speaking, the language of the Mahomedan part of the Indian population, each Hindoo district having its own peculiar patois, though in every village the head man, at least, has a knowledge of that widely-extended dialect in the Peninsula of India.

tain of falling in with a *sambre* (elk) or two, and that by proceeding into the depths of the forest, and making a slight detour to the north, we *might perhaps* hit on the track of wild elephants. We had already been informed that they were sometimes to be met with in the vicinity of the lake, and therefore determined to send the people with the tents and baggage direct to the shores of the Perkhal, whilst, trusting to the fortune of the chase, we put ourselves under the directions of our dusky Nimrod.

On leaving Seevaporam, we took a northerly course, and as we silently advanced in "extended" order, (the large game of the deep jungle requires no beaters,) the woodland scenery at every step assuming a more imposing appearance, we were insensibly led into the deepest recesses of a primeval forest, composed of the greatest variety of to us

unknown trees, some bending under fruits of the most tempting appearance, others waving with the most graceful foliage—the whole often connected by lianas and a variety of creepers, which formed overhead a canopy impervious to the sun, and afforded a secure footing to flocks of large monkeys who carried on their gambols aloft. We were often tempted to put a stop to their fun through the medium of a bullet; but the Hindoo has always a great respect for this *fac-simile* of humanity; and the repugnance expressed by the shekarees whenever we shewed symptoms of *pinking* any very conspicuous gentleman, deterred us from the attempt, more particularly as quarrelling with our guides, in the midst of an unknown and boundless wilderness, would certainly not have been a proof of wisdom. This consideration, together with our having nobler game in view, prevented us from commit-

ting *monkeycide*, although the temptation was always in sight.

We had proceeded two or three hours with few shots, and fewer successful ones, and were consequently, as is generally the case, getting rather careless. D—— was on the extreme right of the line; one of the shekarees was holding his rifle whilst he—and I blush to record it—was lighting a cheroot, when from under his feet sprang a magnificent elk. The noble animal, shaking his wide-spreading antlers, bounded off to the right, and before D—— could regain his rifle was out of sight. I just got a glimpse of him as he shot down a hollow which hid him from our view, and, at the risk of *putting out* the cheroot-smoker, let drive, but apparently without effect, as he neither stopped nor cried "die." After lavishing as much abuse on the vile weed as our good King Jamie did of old, all that re-

mained for us to do was to pursue our course, remaining a little more on the *qui vive.*

We proceeded accordingly; but so exciting was the nature of our occupation, together with the novelty of the scene, that we had no idea time had stolen a march on us, until one of us, consulting his watch, found it was long past noon. A halt was immediately voted, and accordingly, at the first rivulet we came to, under a shady clump of waving bamboos, our frugal repast was displayed, and we proceeded to take an account of the killed and wounded. The latter, being a mere matter of conjecture, we shall say nothing about; and of the former we had rather a "beggarly account of empty bags:" a small hog-deer, one fawn, a large brown squirrel of the size of a rabbit, and a fine eagle, was the sum total, as well as I can recollect, of our day's sport. The

capture of the latter afforded us the best fun. I viewed him on the top of a high tree, and my bullet, merely "barking" the tip of a wing, brought him to the ground. He happened to fall in the midst of some thick underwood, into which one of the niggers immediately dashed. Our attention was soon called to the spot by the most hideous yells proceeding from the shekaree, whom we found engaged in very unequal combat with his feathered foe, who, having both talons firmly fixed into his naked legs, was making with his hooked bill great play on the poor devil's thighs! The scene was ludicrous in the extreme; but we hastened to put both combatants out of pain, by a few gentle raps on the head-piece of the quarrelsome bird, from whom his antagonist took the earliest opportunity of disengaging himself, I believe more frightened than hurt. The eagle

now holds a conspicuous station in a glass-case and snug mansion in Old England; but not having stuffed *t'other* gemman, I have completely lost sight of him.

But return we to our tiffin. However simple our fare, need it be said that we did justice to it? The learned Franklin somewhere remarks, that since the modern improvements in cookery, man eats twice as much as is requisite for his sustenance; but had the old Doctor been seated by a cool stream, in the midst of the Cummermait jungle, after a hard day's fag, in the presence of a cold leg of mutton, hump sandwiches, and two or three brandy-flasks containing.....not water,..... he would, I can venture to say, have proved himself a glutton, and without the aid of sauces or a French cook. And in good sooth it was a good tiffin, and the scene a good subject for a painter in which to have tried the "cunning of his

craft"—a scene that I have perhaps in subsequent years beheld almost equalled amidst the wild sierras of Spain, but certainly nowhere surpassed. The appearance of our companions I have elsewhere attempted to describe—our own was decidedly *not* what would have exactly suited Bond Street; whilst the fine bronzed and nearly naked forms of our guides, our fowling-pieces resting on the slaughtered game, the bamboo wavering over our head as we lay ensconced under the fan-like leaves of the wild turmeric plant, with the clear stream murmuring at our feet, across which had fallen the decayed trunk of a gigantic tree, formed the foreground of a picture framed by the "brown horrors" of the eternal forest. These beauties, I must confess, only disclosed themselves in proportion as the substantials vanished before us, and as our brandy-flasks of course became lighter.

Then came the reflection of whereabouts we might be, and where we were to find our tents. These cogitations being communicated to our guide, he perfectly agreed with us as to the propriety of bending our steps homewards—for such we considered our canvass walls—and further added, that he did not think it likely we should on that day fall in with the elephants. In this we had never been very sanguine, and consequently our disappointment was not great; and as the shadows were perceptibly taking an easterly direction, we lost no time in getting together our traps. This done, our guide inquired what was the hour; and then, after looking at the sun, proceeded without the least hesitation towards the source of the stream on whose banks we had just made such an agreeable repast.

In following its winding course we perhaps encountered more obstacles than we

had hitherto met with to impede our progress, which was further delayed by an occasional shot and the concomitant operation of loading: however this be, it was getting late; there were yet no signs of the lake, and we began to feel proportionably uncomfortable at the idea of going to bed supperless under the canopy of heaven. Our guide, however, shewed no symptoms of uneasiness. "Kooch purwah nay, sub bhot-atchia hy!" (Never mind, 'tis all well!) was all he deigned to utter, as he still followed with elastic steps the to us interminable rivulet. Evening was fast approaching, and we were getting exceedingly tired; but what could we do? To follow our swarthy companion was our only resource; and we did so, until suddenly brought up by a high and steep embankment, out of which the stream appeared to flow.

Our guide exultingly took the lead, and

on surmounting the eminence the Perkhal lake suddenly burst on our view. In one respect we were disappointed: from the *bund* or embankment on which we stood the lake was evidently artificial, and produced by an extensive valley being dammed up at one extremity: still, when we reflected on the time and labour requisite for such a stupendous undertaking, we could not withhold our admiration of the industry of a people, perhaps in the universe alone capable of completing such works as these and the caves of Elephanta and Ellora. But, although the work of man, the effect of this vast sheet of water, embosomed in hills covered with noble forest trees, whose shadows were thrown by the setting sun on its smooth, unruffled surface, was truly grand, and, tired as we were, we could not help waiting in silent admiration whilst the descending luminary gilded with his last

rays the opposite mountains; and it was not until the whole scene had assumed the more sober garb of twilight that we proceeded to our tents, scarcely a quarter of a mile from the spot at which we had "debouched."

On our way to camp we observed several alligators floating lazily on the smooth water, but they did not deter us from taking a refreshing dip, (though I must confess we ventured not far from the shore,) before we sat down to a dinner, prefatory to one of the agreeable evenings we always spent. On the present occasion we were entirely engrossed by the sport we anticipated (in spite of that bird of ill omen, old Cassim) in cruising on the Lake on board our little vessel, "The Black Joke," and scragging alligators innumerable. Amongst many other anecdotes of the "water tiger," we laughed heartily at a story one of the party had

heard related by Colonel ——, who, by-the-bye, was commonly known in the Madras Army by the name of "Lying Charlie."

"It was during the Mahratta war," went Charlie's story, "and our division, in an out-of-the-way part of the country, somewhere between the Godavery and Nerbuddah, lay in camp on the banks of a large tank swarming with alligators. Every effort had been unavailingly made to shoot the monsters, when, recollecting my boyish exploits in cat hunting, I suggested the following plan:—There were numerous bamboos growing round the tank; a strong stalk of one of these, possessing all the elasticity of a yew-bow, was to be bent to the ground, and fastened to a tent peg, driven in sufficiently to make it retain that position. This done, a dog was next to be tied down close to the peg, and a rope with a running knot

fastened in such a manner to the bamboo that the alligator must insert his head into the noose before he could reach the cur, whom he would seize, and, attempting to bear away, tear up the tent peg—the bamboo, released from its hold, immediately rebounding with such violence as to carry aloft the whole trio—dog, peg, and crocodile!

"The idea was eagerly seized, and in the evening we proceeded to carry it into execution by *baiting* twenty or thirty bamboos; and so successful was the experiment, that not an eye was closed that night in camp, from the dreadful bellowing of the monsters, as they swung to the winds of heaven. Next morning we were gratified by the sight of the finest crop of bamboo fruit ever witnessed,—every tree bearing its burden of a tent peg, a pariah dog, and an alligator, some already dead, others in their last agonies. The disturb-

ance caused by their roaring had, however, been so great that the General put a stop to the sport in next day's orders."

So much for "Lying Charlie's" yarn! Poor fellow! he is gone to his long home —may his ashes *lie* in peace!

As our stay at the Lake was to be of some duration, the next day our people were employed in *hutting*, and it is astonishing in what a short space of time, with the aid of a few branches, leaves, and long grass, they managed to erect very comfortable habitations for themselves; and a flourishing city, as in days of yore, and previous to the visitations of the "Spirit," once more spring up on the banks of the Perkhal: however, the "Water Sprite" was not forgotten, and we took the earliest opportunity of visiting its usual haunt—the Goundum Pagoda.

With all the requisites for spending the

day, our servants were dispatched thither by land, whilst, committing the "Black Joke" to its native element, we boldly ventured on the spell-bound waters, and after a hard pull succeeded in making the point on which stood the dreaded Pagoda. It presented the usual sombre appearance of a Hindoo place of worship, the gloom of which was much increased by the dark shade of the lofty trees growing around it. Its low and solid pillars of granite, supporting massive slabs of the same material, appeared to defy the ravages of time; nothing but an actual convulsion of nature could apparently overthrow such an edifice. Still it bore marks of having long since been deserted by man: the bastard banyan was insidiously fixing its roots (roots which apparently draw nourishment from the rock itself) in the interstices of the solid masonry; while the rubbish which encumbered the in-

terior, and the strong and disagreeable smell of bats, now its usual occupants, plainly shewed that the officiating Brahmin had long since deserted his post—that the pilgrim and devotee no longer presented his offerings at the shrine—and that it was, in short, abandoned to the sway of the wayward "Spirit of the Lake," who, if her story be true, could not have chosen a more appropriate spot—

"Where still to go at midnight hour,
To weep alone in that high bower,
And watch and look along the deep
For *him* whose *death* first made her weep."

MOORE.

We passed the day as time is generally spent on such occasions—lounging about, shooting, reading, and sketching the venerable relic under whose portals we all assembled to a rather late tiffin. The sparkling glass soon dispelled any gloom we might have contracted from the

" brown horrors" of all that surrounded us—our board was a fallen column, our seats part of its ornaments, or maybe a prostrate figure of the god Hunayman, or Ganesha, whose rounded belly formed certainly a rather hard but not uncomfortable cushion. The conversation gradually turned on the surrounding objects.

" Come," said I to M—, " *you* are learned in all these mysteries; expound unto us the nature of all these rum old chaps of stone scattered around, together with their pedigree and all their history."

" 'Pon my soul," replied he, " I should like to be able to amuse you, were it only for the sake of passing half an hour whilst we finish this claret; but you know I am no orator, and feel exceedingly timid before so learned an audience."

" Never mind," said I; " put this

book into your fist, and fancy you are reading its contents."

Whereupon, with admirable mock gravity he commenced as follows:—"The temple under whose holy shade we are now cracking our nuts must, I should imagine from its construction, have belonged to the ancient sect of the Jainas, as some suppose allied to that of Buddah. Their founder was Rishabadeva, who was incarnate thirteen times. His creed consisted in overcoming the eight great crimes —viz. eating at night, slaying an animal, tasting flesh, taking the wealth of others, or taking by force a married woman, eating flour, or butter, or cheese.... I'll trouble you for a bit of Stilton.

"The little pot-bellied gentleman with the long snout, of whose carcase you are making such good use, is Ganesha. He was not born of woman; but Parvati one day taking a foot-bath in the Ganges,

formed him from the slime and scum of the holy waters which were floating past her. The young gentleman, however, happening to irritate his fierce papa, or rather Parvati's husband, Siva, was decapitated in a twinkling; but when Siva found out it was Parvati's pet babby on whom he had been playing a practical joke, he hastened to repair the mischief, by replacing the head with the first one he could find, which happened to be an elephant's."

God knows how much longer M— would have continued his dissertation on Hindoo mythology, had he not been interrupted by the sudden entrance of old Cassim, who, in great agitation, exclaimed, "Sahib! a mist having arisen over the Lake, the people are afraid to remain on account of 'the Talab ka Jinn,'" (Spirit of the Waters.) In fact it was time for us to be roused, as it was getting late; and issu-

ing hastily from the entrance of the Pagoda, we beheld a dense fog rising from the surface of the Lake, which warned us of the necessity of immediate departure.

We lost no time in unmooring our little skiff, and were soon so completely enveloped in fog as to lose sight of the shore. The natives in the boat were getting more and more alarmed: at last, when they beheld the mist wreathing itself into fantastic forms along the yet smooth surface of the Lake, they declared it must be the "Talab ka Jinn," threw down their oars, and refused to pull another stroke. We took their places, making up our minds for a hard tug; but our troubles were not to be so easily ended. The mist at last only partially cleared away to discover to us an inky canopy of clouds of the most threatening aspect: the wind began to sigh mournfully over the waters, and a few large drops of rain fell at

lengthened intervals. Then came a lull, and Nature seemed sunk into a lethargic slumber, whilst the atmosphere felt indescribably close and oppressive. These symptoms were too evident to be mistaken—a storm was brewing, and presently overtook us with that violence peculiar to the tropics. The surface of the water, lately so smooth and unruffled, was now boiling like a cauldron, the rain descended in torrents, and as the waves rose they dashed over our little barky, and baling became requisite to keep her afloat.

We were perhaps at no time in positive danger; still the idea of swamping, and afterwards to stand the chance of being picked up by a hungry alligator, were none of the most pleasing associations. And then the "Spirit!"—it might perhaps in vindictive sport be at that moment hovering around us, muttering a Sanscrit version to the following effect:—

" Merrily *row*, the *lightning* shines bright,
Both current and ripple are dancing in light:
Ye have roused the night raven, I heard him
shriek
As we flashed along beneath the *teak*
That flings its broad branches so far and so wide,
Their shadows are dancing in the midst of the
tide.
Who wakes my nestlings? the Raven, he said,
My beak shall ere noon in his blood be red,
For a blue swollen corpse is a dainty meal,
I'll have my share with *alligator* and eel."

SCOTT.

But we were *fortunately* too much taken up with the things of this world to have time to listen to spirits—white, black, or grey. We, however, heard the crash of the thunder and the roar of the storm above us, the " reaching" of the Niggers, and the lashing of the waves below, and thought ourselves devilish lucky when the wind, abating a little, allowed us to distinguish two or three shots at no great distance, fired by the sepoys of the guard.

This was rather encouraging; we gave

three cheers, felt in our nearly exhausted frames and drooping arms renewed vigour; and our spirits, which a few minutes before had begun to be rather at a low ebb, now renovated by the sunshine of hope, stimulated us to fresh and renewed efforts.

Never do the precepts of philosophy come so much home to us as when backed by facts and dear-bought experience; and five minutes of the latter had more effect in convincing me of the power which hope has on both our *morale* and *physique*, than would have had, under other circumstances, a lecture of five hours. The one appeared to be a natural consequence of the other; as hope revived our spirits rising in the same ratio, appeared to impart a before unfelt vigour to our weary frames, and lent to our arms a strength which a few minutes before appeared to have been nearly quite exhausted.

The boat, it appeared, had, during the continuance of the gale, drifted nearly

opposite the camp, till a broad space of angry waters separated us from our haven of refuge, where we looked forward to the termination of our toils. Our shouts appeared to have been heard by those on shore, for the firing was repeated, and a flickering gleam amidst the surrounding darkness occasionally made us aware that lanterns were moving about to and fro. "Give way, lads," cried we, "and another quarter of an hour will bring us snugly to an anchor in a better berth than this confounded bubbling cauldron."

We *did* give way, and although the water effervesced under the vigorous strokes of our straining paddles, which made the basket-sides of the little "Joke" creak again in mortal agony, still we appeared to be barely keeping our own, and the cause of this was soon found out. We had shipped so much water as to have lost all buoyancy, and till this was got rid of we saw we had little chance of

making our port. We roused up one of the Lascars, who appeared to be rather less under the influence of fear and sea-sickness than the rest of his companions, and by dint of promises and threats, at last succeeded in making him bale out the water, whilst we unceasingly continued our efforts to stem the wind and waves.

By degrees, our little bark appeared less and less heavy in hand, till at last, as she got rid of her incumbrance of liquid ballast, we could feel her by degrees yielding obedience to our straining efforts, and she finally forged gallantly a-head.

By degrees, the lights were more distinctly seen, the sound of voices was heard, the white form of a tent loomed amidst the darkness, and we got into smoother water, under the shelter of the high and wooded bank, and were soon safely moored in a snug, sandy little creek, under the groaning branches of some huge teak trees.

CHAPTER II.

EFFECTS OF A STORM—HOME, SWEET HOME—THE ROCK OF GOOLENCONDAH—THE POTAIL'S STORY—THE PHANTOM—UNSUCCESSFUL ATTEMPT ON A BEAR—THE BRINJARI—THEIR WOMEN—ENCOUNTER WITH BRUIN—THE BEAR FEAST—A LADY'S PET.

"I was with Hercules and Cadmus once,
When in a wood of Crete they bay'd the bear."

SHAKSPEARE.

GLADLY did we leave our frail skiff, and, scrambling up the rugged banks of the lake, expected to find a termination to all our troubles under the shelter of our canvas, or rather cotton walls: grievous, therefore, was our disappointment on beholding the state our little camp had been

reduced to by the late storm. Little apprehending bad weather at this time of the year, the Lascars had pitched their tents in their usual careless manner; the consequence was, that, with one exception, they were all prostrate on the ground. The grass huts of the natives had been scattered to the winds of heaven; of *them* not a vestige remained; and on our arrival we found the only surviving tent crowded with all our attendants and followers. Our first care was to have this, our last place of refuge, secured against any further invasion of the storm. A trench was immediately dug, the tent pegs bushed,* and all the ropes hauled taut. We next began to think of getting dry apparel, which we with difficulty obtained; and these points settled down with a stif-

* A plan of preventing the tent pegs from giving way in wet weather by burying round them twigs and branches of trees.

fencr of grog, we made up our minds to pass the night as best we could.

Never did any tenement present a more motley assemblage of inmates than did our tent on that eventful night: coolies and bullock drivers, their wives and children, servants and sepoys, were all admitted under our hospitable roof, barely sufficient to contain the multitude, which, so closely pent up amidst a mass of wet canvas and clothes, soon began to ferment and smoke like a dunghill on a frosty morning, and, similar to that useful article, sent up fumes differing slightly from attar of roses or lavender water. It may, therefore, be supposed that the first dawn of day was gladly hailed by at least the European part of the community; and a glorious morning it was; the unclouded sun rose with unusual splendour, the air was cool, and all nature appeared revived and renovated by its late convulsion.

The forenoon was busily employed in rebuilding our city, which, unlike that of Rome, was completed long before the approach of evening, and everything went on smoothly for several days, the natives enjoying the repose of a long halt, with its concomitant of black man's fun (sleep), whilst we no less enjoyed the toils of the chase, which, in that deep and boundless forest, amply repaid all our exertions. The amusements of both were, however, soon to have an end: a malignant fever made its appearance in the camp, at first partially amongst the followers, till, rapidly extending, it at last attacked our head and chief, M——. He manfully fought against it at first, disliking the idea of quitting his post, but at last we prevailed on him to leave the charge of the survey to D——, and hasten into cantonments, whither G—— and myself proposed to accompany him.

Placing him in his palkee, we took the nearest road out of the jungles, and, proceeding by the hill fort of Zafferghur, shortly afterwards emerged into the open country, where we considered ourselves comparatively at home. Home! that magic sound and sweetest of words, which conveys instantaneously, to the exiled Briton, visions of the days of his youth—of the snug fireside—loving parents and dear friends and associates! It is the hope of again enjoying these blessings which enables him to bear up against the desert's heat, the storms of the ocean, and the deadly effects of a pestilential clime. Such, reader, may have been *thy* feelings, if ever it has been thy fate to be separated by half the span of this terrestrial globe from those thou holdest dearest to thy heart! Still even to the exiled pilgrim in a foreign land there is a second home, which, like the false dawn in the east, though it pos-

sess not the full lustre of the real aurora, gladdens the spirit of the wanderer in the night of his exile—I mean the abode and companions endeared to us in a foreign clime by habit, a similarity of pursuits, and a common destiny. In such a channel ran my thoughts on ascending the steep and high mass of granite, at the foot of which stands the village of Goolencondah, where we had halted for the day. The shelving ascent towards the village is so precipitous that we were fain to creep up barefooted the smooth and slippery surface of the rock, and, whilst resting under the shade of a small Hindoo temple which crowns the height, were amply repaid by the splendid view at our feet. We had travelled during the night; it was still early morn, and the mists had not yet disappeared from the low cultivated grounds around. Detached portions of vapour were floating along amidst the

groves of date-trees at our feet, like nocturnal spirits taking their departure on the approach of day.

"Those groups of lovely date-trees bending
Languidly their leaf-crown'd heads,
Like youthful maids when sleep descending
Warns them to their silken beds,"

MOORE.

proved to us we had fairly quitted the "deep jungle," and were once more amidst the abodes of man.

Our meditations were, however, soon cut short on approaching the opposite ledge of the rock, which overhung in a perpendicular manner a growth of thick underwood and immense fragments of granite which lay scattered beneath; here we were assailed by the most discordant sounds, evidently proceeding from wild animals in the abyss below, but of what description we were at a loss to conjecture. Hastening, therefore, to our usual source of information, the potail, or

head man of the village, we eagerly inquired of him if there were any *sheekar* (hunting or shooting) in the neighbourhood. He said there were several bears amongst the wooded crags on the other side of the rock, but owing to the numerous fissures and clefts, their usual places of retreat, it was impossible to get at them, unless by watching during the night, when they repaired to the surrounding jungles in search of food. He added, looking very mysterious, that the neighbourhood contained also other sheekar, but that he would advise us to have nothing to do with it.

This of course did not satisfy us; therefore questioning the old gentleman more closely, he at last said, "You will, perhaps, not believe me, but what I am about to say is true: Three years ago the country between this and Pemburty was infested by a tiger, which, not content with bul-

locks and goats, destroyed the shepherds, labourers, and travellers; nay, it used even to enter the villages and carry off the inhabitants. A sheekaree at last shot it, by posting himself in a tree near a pool which it frequented to quench its thirst. That it was killed is known to all, as people from every part flocked to Pemburty to see the carcass of an animal which had done more or less harm to most. I saw it with my own eyes, and never shall I forget the frightful object: it had no more hair on it than I have on the palm of my hand, but its claws, teeth, and whiskers, were of enormous size. Well, gentlemen, we now thought we might rest in peace, as he was the only tiger known in the neighbourhood, and we all congratulated ourselves on his death; when, that same night, a woman was carried off in Pemburty itself by a tiger, which those who witnessed the deed declared to be the

same one that had been killed that morning. It could, however, only possibly be its *jina* (spirit); and since then it nightly roves about Pemburty, Goolencondah, and the neighbouring villages, with the most dismal howls and moans, destroying everything it comes across. Some have been foolish enough to try to shoot it, but have invariably been maimed or killed in the attempt; as where is the use of waging war on what is neither flesh nor blood?"

We were a good deal amused at the old Potail's account, which was easily explained. The tiger which has once tasted human blood prefers it to that of all other animals, and will invariably leave the flock untouched to pounce on the shepherd. But, however savoury it may be, the flesh of man does not appear to agree with these epicures, as they invariably lose their fine glossy coat, the hair falls off, and they assume all the un-

healthy and disgusting appearance of a mangy dog. This is the distinguishing sign of the *man-eater*. Now it appears evident that there were at the same time two of these gentlemen in the vicinity, and when one met his death, the survivor got the credit of being his comrade's ghost.

Not having at present time to go in search of the *phantom*, we turned our attention to the bears. G—— and myself accordingly sallied out after breakfast to that part of the hill from whence had proceeded those hideous sounds. After climbing over huge fragments of rock, and tearing our hands, clothes, and faces with the entangled briers, we arrived immediately under a deep fissure in the solid rock, and were in the act of ascending towards it, when an enormous bear rushed to the entrance with a frightful growl, but immediately retired. We were

too much engaged in scrambling up the rugged precipice to be able to take a shot at him, and when we arrived at the entrance of the cleft he was no longer to be seen, nor was it possible to follow him. We remained a long time in silent expectation of a second appearance, but in vain. We then tried to smoke him out, with as little success; and after thus spending in fruitless attempts the greater part of the day, returned empty-handed to our tent, where M—— was awaiting the result of the expedition. We, however, fully determined to return to the charge as soon as we had placed the invalid within reach of the cantonment, not wishing to leave him in his present state before he got a clear offing from the jungles.

We had a long march before us to Boanghir: M——, in his palankeen, left during the night, and we followed early

in the morning. The scenery was now very different from what we had been lately accustomed to, the road occasionally winding through low jungle, along the edge of rice-fields, or over the bund of a tank covered with water fowl of every description, amongst which we were often tempted to let drive a charge of No. 3, thereby giving our horsekeepers the opportunity of having a cold bath in collecting the killed and wounded.

As we approached Boanghir, our progress was often retarded by long strings of bullocks carrying grain, and belonging to some wandering Lombari, or, as they are generally called in this part of the country, "Brinjari;" a most extraordinary race of people, and of a caste entirely distinct from the rest of the Hindoos, with whom they have little intercourse, being quite dissimilar in language, manners, and customs. These wanderers

never enter a house. In the height of the monsoon, during the coldest weather, or whilst the hot land-winds are scorching up the earth, and driving every living being to seek for shade and shelter, these hardy and lawless sons of the camp are always in the *meidan* (open-fields). In peaceable times their vocation is trading in grain, thence their appellation; from *beringe*, the Persian for corn, and *aourdun*, to carry. Their riches consist in their numerous bullocks, and a fierce race of dogs to guard their property at night. During any commotions in the country, they attach themselves to either party, supply it with grain, and hire out their bullocks for carriage, taking care to plunder both friends and foes, and to devastate the country which may be the scene of war, whenever opportunities present themselves of doing so with impunity: in fact, they are most determined *loot-wallahs*

(plunderers), as was but too well proved during the Mysore war, when the English army had several thousand Brinjaris in their train, to supply them as above-mentioned.

Their bullocks graze on the side of the road as they travel along, or, when they halt during the day, are their own purveyors in the neighbouring jungle; at night-fall they are fastened in a circle round the encampment, which consists of sacks full of grain piled up, over which others are placed crossways, so as to form a space sufficient to creep into: during the rains, this *edifice* is covered with a couple of coarse blankets, stretched out and fastened to pegs; and in such abodes do this hardy race spend the time which is not employed on the march. Although constantly exposed to the elements, they are much fairer than the generality of the lower class of Hindoos;

the women are finely shaped, large, and good-looking, and might perhaps possess attractions if they added cleanliness to their picturesque and gaudy dress; which consists of a petticoat of red or blue, fastened above the hips, with a similar coloured scarf thrown over one shoulder, whilst the ancles, arms, and ears, nay, even the *nose*, are loaded with massive brass ornaments. Their carriage, like that of all other Hindoo females, is graceful in the extreme; but so filthy are they in their persons, that they never by any chance remove their dress until it actually falls off from sheer wear and tear. The Brinjari women have the character of being extremely dissolute, so much so as to be proverbial: it is even said that they often go in a body, and oblige such men as they fall in with to accede to their wishes; but I must confess, that although frequently whilst shooting in the jungle

I have met these nut-brown maids both alone and in company, I was never placed by them in that awkward predicament.*

Mais revenons à nos moutons. — We arrived after a tedious march at Boanghir, and next morning took leave of M——, as we had resolved to see a little more of Goolencondah before our final return to head-quarters.

We took the opportunity of writing to a couple of sporting friends, acquainting them with our expectations there, requesting them to join us with an elephant, sundry supplies, and, as the hot weather

* These people, in their habits and customs, bear a considerable affinity to the gypsies, so well known in England and in many other parts of Europe; though, perhaps, to the latter, another wandering tribe, called the *Kurarers*, have a still closer relation; these are by occupation tinkers and basket-makers; of the lowest cast, and feed indiscriminately on anything, no matter of how unclean or disgusting a nature.

had now set in, to bring out cuscus tatties and a detachment of tauny-catches, with the particular proviso that the damsels should be young, active, and good-looking.*

After taking these preliminary steps, we retraced our road to Goolencondah, and in the evening found ourselves at our old quarters, under a clump of ancient tamarind trees at the foot of the rock.

The following morning I in vain endeavoured to rouse my chum G——: he declared he would have a regular *caulker* after two such long days' march. I was, therefore, obliged to sally out alone, or rather in company with my old horse-keeper Chennoo, in quest of Orsino, and

* Cuscus tatties are mats made of a sweet-smelling grass, which are kept wet, and the wind blowing through them produces a delightful coolness: the tauny-catch is the woman employed to keep the tatty constantly wet.

determined, in spite of rocks and briers, to penetrate into the heart of his stronghold, and beard the lion in his very den; but in so doing had to encounter a thousand difficulties, for, after proceeding some distance up the hill,

"Further way I found none, so thick entwin'd
As one continued brake, the undergrowth
Of shrubs and tangling bushes had perplex'd
All path of man or beast that pass'd that way;"

MILTON.

and was often obliged in the course of my progress to creep along on all-fours through this intricate maze. I had just emerged from this awkward position, followed by Chennoo, when, at the turn of a rock, a large bear appeared within ten paces. The brute was advancing very slowly, and looking up in my face with the most ludicrous gravity, which I soon put an end to by giving him my left barrel through the head, whereupon the facetious monster rose capering on his hind legs:

bang went No. 2 barrel, and over rolled friend Bruin, apparently lifeless. Immediately from the spot whereon he lay extended, arose a din which might have awakened the dead; for an instant I was taken quite aback, but soon recollected it to be a second edition of the music I had heard some days before from the top of the rock; and hastening to ascertain the cause, to my surprise I beheld two young cubs holding on like sick monkeys by the long and shaggy coat of their prostrate dam, and roaring most lustily. I had no idea of letting the youngsters slip through my fingers; so running up, I laid hold of each by the *scruff* of the neck, and attempted to drag them off their maternal hold. In the meantime, the old lady, who apparently had only been in a trance, feeling something unusual going on, with an effort recovered her legs, and began with one fore-paw to wipe away the blood

and brains which were trickling over her eyes and obscuring her visual organs: luckily Chennoo, who carried my spear and rifle, was at hand, and applying the muzzle of the latter to her ear, I settled her *instanter*.

The young 'uns still singing out, but making no attempt to escape, I remained a moment looking at the old hag to see if she were now really dead or only shamming. Chennoo was likewise steadfastly contemplating the *cratur*, till at last, giving utterance to his reflections, he exclaimed, "Dekho, Sahib, you see, Sar, that d—n Bhan-Choot, him come night-time into willage, him get into house, and him take off woman to the jungle; I bhot khoosh (very glad) Sahib kill d—n rascal." After this sentimental effusion, not being able without assistance to move the old one, we secured a cub each, and, in spite

of their cries, carried them in triumph to the tent.

Six or seven men were requisite to remove the defunct to the tent, where we soon had a couple of *chucklers* hard at work in the process of skinning. These people, whose name is a European corruption from the *chakali* or shoemaker caste, are considered the lowest of the low — the despised amongst the dishonoured: even the outcast Pariah looks down with contempt and abhorrence on the unhappy chuckler. The meanest and most revolting offices in society devolve on this unfortunate race. They are employed to remove carrion and filth, to officiate as executioners and hangmen; in fact, whatever is considered as too degrading for people of other castes, or even of no caste at all, is imposed on the *chuckler*; nor do his appearance and

habits belie his occupations: small and decrepid in stature, filthy in their tastes, this degraded race hesitates not to commit what the Hindoos consider the height of abomination and impurity, by eating food of any kind, no matter how loathsome: they will feast voraciously on the carrion of a horse, or any other animal; and it was, therefore, no matter of astonishment to us when, having concluded their task, they claimed the carcass of the bear.

It was given to them, with the exception of one haunch, which, having often heard of the celebrated Westphalia hams, I had determined to dish up as an experiment. Bear-flesh was accordingly served up to dinner that day under every possible shape—bear soup, bear stew, bear stakes, bear curry: having no cloth, the table itself was *bare;* it could scarcely *bear* the weight of the feast, nor could we for*bear* admiring its variety and profusion. But

however beautiful to the eye, the first mouthful was quite sufficient for my palate—I never had such a sickener: however, determined to give G—— his fill of it, I loaded my plate, extolling it to the skies; but what he, in the innocence of his heart, fancied I put into my mouth, was craftily conveyed under the table; and such was the effect of example, that G——, seeing me make such play, imagining it *must* be good, ate abundantly of the abominable mess. Poor fellow! I was afterwards sorry for the trick I had played him, as a dozen emetics would scarcely have had the effect produced by this un*bear*able food. Shortly afterwards we were more successful in our experimental cookery with a porcupine, whose flesh we found extremely delicate, and much resembling that of wild hog.

The young bears, with all their sorrows

before them, being duly packed in a basket and placed on the head of a cooly, were shipped off to the cantonment as a present to a lady to whom I had promised to send a *pretty pet* from the jungles. One died on the voyage, from grief at the tragic fate of its mother; the other, of a less susceptible disposition, reached his destination, became very tame, very big, and so very saucy, that, from having the range of the house and garden, he was obliged to be chained up, and, for aught I know, remains to this day in irons, cursing the author of his fate.

CHAPTER III.

THE PHANTOM MAN-EATER—A NIGHT ADVENTURE—SPORT SPOILED—TIGER HUNTING ON ELEPHANTS—GALLANT ACTION—EFFECTS OF JUNGLE FEVER—GAME IN THE DEEP JUNGLE.

"I will roar, that it will do any man's heart good to hear me: I will roar, that I will make the Duke say, 'Let him roar again, let him roar again.'"

MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM.

HAVING now, as we supposed, rooted out the bear family, we turned our whole thoughts towards the destruction of the fearful apparition so minutely described by the old potail. He further told us, that as the "phantom" had not now been heard for several nights near Goolencon-

dah, we might soon expect to have notice of his arrival, which was always announced by the dismal moaning and deep howls with which he invariably accompanied his nocturnal expeditions. This was the only sign by which his approach was made known, and if any one ever did behold him, he never survived to tell the tale. The old man again admonished us of the danger we were about to incur in the pursuit of what he evidently considered a supernatural creature, and entreated us to desist from the attempt.

The moon was shining brightly on the second evening of our return to Goolencondah ; the light foliage of the tamarind trees was dancing in fantastic shadows on the fly* and white walls of our tent, as we sat under their friendly boughs, inhaling the grateful fumes of a cheroot, and

* The roof or top part of the tent.

enjoying the coolness and serenity of the night, whose death-like stillness was only occasionally broken by the shrill whistle of the plover in its nocturnal flight, or the distant cry of a solitary jackal. It was one of those evenings peculiar to the tropics, when all nature, after panting through a day of molten fire, seems to be recruiting her exhausted energies and renovating her parched frame, by inhaling the refreshing dews of heaven, which glistened under the rays of a light so purely clear and serene, as to eclipse the very fire-flies flitting around us, and which looked like flickering stars dimly seen through a mist.

Conversation on our part had gradually ceased, and we sat in taciturn admiration of the scene. The servants and followers, squatted around the tent, appeared to be animated by the same spirit as ourselves; the very horses at their pickets seemed to

feel the sweet and silent influence of the hour—

"Amid whose fairy loneliness
Nought but the *Lapwing's* cry is heard,
Nought seen, but (when the shadows, flitting
Fast from the moon, unsheath its gleam)
Some purple-wing'd Sultana sitting
Upon a column motionless,
And glittering like an idol bird."

MOORE.

How long we may have remained in this state I know not; time keeps no account of such moments: but, as if by an electric shock, we were awakened from our reverie by a sound the most appalling it has ever been my fate to listen to. I have heard, through the gusts of a stormy night, the fiend-like yells of a troop of jackals tearing from the new-made grave the body of the departed; I have listened to the varying and demoniac cries of the hyæna within a few yards of my tent; shrieks of agony and cries of pain have

often assailed my ears; but never did tones, however terrific, produce on my nerves the thrilling sensation they experienced, when those fearful sounds first issued from the surrounding jungle, amidst the stillness of that heavenly night. They were, as Jonathan would say, a cross between distant thunder, the deep bellowing of an enraged bull, and the low threatening growl of a mastiff—*en tout* a most unmusical blending of most inharmonious sounds.

The horses pricked their ears, snorted, hung back on their head ropes, and, by their trembling, evinced every symptom of trepidation. Our whole party was on foot in an instant. "The Phantom, by Jove!" cried G——, as we went in for our "bundouks" (guns); and the moans, howls, or growling, I know not which to call them, continued at intervals, but appeared to recede. We hastily called a

council of war, and decided on following the sounds whether proceeding from beast or devil. I know, for one, I would on that occasion have much rather been on the *outside* of an elephant: probably G—— did not feel a whit more comfortable; but we were mutually ashamed to draw back; therefore, followed by a whole *posse* of black fellows, we put ourselves *en marche.*

From the direction of the sounds, our enemy did not appear to keep a very steady course. At one moment we fancied we had gained considerably on him, when a fainter howl, proceeding from another point of the compass, brought the conviction that he had again placed a greater distance between us. We might have continued thus for a quarter of an hour or twenty minutes, when suddenly a tremendous crash through the underwood and a startling grunt, brought at once the

butts to our shoulders and our hearts into our mouths. It was, however, a false alarm, and occasioned by coming suddenly on a large wild boar, whose nocturnal repast we had thus unceremoniously disturbed. He went off unscathed: at any other time he would have had the contents of four barrels after him, but was not now considered worth powder and shot.

We were again, after a momentary stop, silently pursuing our trackless path, and *now* evidently gaining on the chase, the howling becoming more and more clear and distinct, indeed, most unpleasantly so; for although we might feel pretty confident on the score of an encounter with a ghost, yet allow me to remark that the near prospect of meeting face to face, and on foot, with a royal tiger, and that tiger a notorious man-eater, by the wavering and uncertain light of the moon,

cannot fail to produce a queer sensation, perhaps approaching somewhat to the perspiring qualities of the palms of *Bob Acres'* hands, notwithstanding the confidence one may feel in flint or detonator, Egg or Joe Manton. With this impression floating on my mind, I cast the *tail* of my eye over my left shoulder to see how our forces mustered, when, to my surprise, of all the swarthy champions who had set out bursting with confidence and valour, only two remained—my head servant, yclept the "Grenadier," and old Chennoo. This was a sad falling off, but it was now too late to recede. With our diminished forces we pushed briskly on; the sounds were now fearfully near, and with intervals of shorter duration. There was a large opening in the underwood, towards which they appeared to move: we redoubled our speed, expecting to get a shot in the open space. I looked round

once more, when, behold! the last of our dusky allies had vanished into thin air. "D—n them," whispered G——, "we are better without the cowardly rascals." We made a run for the open space, and stopped behind a bush on the verge of it. The next howl was considerably to our left. We had made a wrong cast, and were hastening to retrieve our error, when the moon suddenly became overcast, and so thick a mist arose, that to take any kind of aim would have been utterly impossible. We therefore beat a retreat, after a severe trial of our own nerves, and of the *pluck* of our gallant army. Although thus baffled in our first attempt of even a sight of the *cratur*, still it was satisfactory to know that there *was* something to repay the friends whom we expected for the trouble of a sixty-mile march—supposing always that we did not bag our game before their arrival; and

that this did not occur was no fault of ours.

Next morning we determined on a new expedient to entrap the 'gemman *wat* howled. Between the tamarind grove where we were encamped and the neighbouring jungle was an open space of two or three hundred yards, and immediately on the borders of the latter grew a noble banyan tree. Having procured from the village a couple of *char-paies*,* we fixed them firmly on the wide-spreading branches at about fifteen or twenty feet from the ground, but so as to be thence completely invisible, and between nine and ten o'clock in the evening proceeded to the spot, taking with us a calf, which we tethered as a bait. We then ascended the tree, and, accompanied only by the Grenadier

* Low bedsteads made use of by the natives, consisting of a wooden frame with a netting of coir rope.

and one of G—'s servants, patiently waited for a nibble. We might have been there an hour before we again heard those sounds, which, once heard, were never to be forgotten. They then gradually approached, and we certainly, in our present position, felt rather more comfortable than we had done on the preceding night. They came nearer and nearer, and at last appeared stationary, and not more than thirty or forty yards distant: we imagined that the monster was making ready to spring on his trembling victim, and prepared ourselves accordingly. He might have done so; but at this moment a violent fit of coughing, which he had long been endeavouring to smother, seized the Grenadier. The howling suddenly ceased; the animal had taken the alarm, and evidently retired. It would have required the patience of Job to have been calmly able to bear this, and at the very moment

too when we expected to strike our quarry. I *haram-zadah'd* and *bhan-chooted** the terrified and coughing wretch, and insisted on his taking forthwith his departure. He would much rather have remained until certain of having fairly coughed the tiger out of the way, but I was peremptory. Finding, therefore, there was no alternative, he slid down out of his roost, and plied his long shanks across the open space which separated him from safety with a celerity which might have even baffled the "phantom" had he attempted the pursuit; but he did not, and we saw the Grenadier arrive in safety at the tent, and dive under its protecting roof.

We well knew that after this we had little chance of success *that* night, but determined, nevertheless, to try our luck

* Terms of abuse not translateable into the English language.

a little longer; when, as the "iron tongue of midnight did strike twelve," and we were beginning to nod on our perch, the calf, with great lamentations, suddenly rolled over in the gripe of some large animal, which had darted on it like lightning from a neighbouring bush. The attack had been so unexpected that, before we could ascertain by whom it was made, four barrels sent their contents at the intruder, who took himself off nearly as quickly as he had made his appearance, but apparently unscathed, and it was not till then we discovered it to be a large wolf. So much for the accuracy of night shooting! We certainly were not more than six or eight yards from our mark, and yet apparently neither wolf nor calf were touched by our discharge—the latter a little mauled about the head by the fangs of his new acquaintance, but was not much the worse for it; and as

we led him from the field of battle he shewed not the least reluctance to leave so delightful a spot.

The two following evenings our patience was not rewarded with a nibble, not even a single *roar;* and we were delighted when at last the reinforcement of our two friends, L—— and H——, arrived, and announced the near approach of a couple of elephants they had brought out with them; though it did not enhance our pleasure to hear that the one destined for the use of G—— and myself had a short time before, in a fit of ungovernable rage,* killed his mahout (keeper). However, we consoled ourselves with the reflection that we stood much less chance of being *scragged* by a "must" elephant than by a man-eating tiger, and determined to stand our chance.

* This is sometimes the case when the elephant becomes "must," or in the rutting season.

The day after the arrival of the huttees (elephants), as we were preparing for a start, a number of villagers came in a great hurry to the tent to inform us that a boy had been killed that morning by the tiger near the Pemburty hill, four or five miles distant. In consequence of having been closely followed, he had dropped his prey, but had been tracked to the hill. This appeared to be a golden opportunity; we therefore immediately got under weigh, and, following our terrified conductors, in due time reached the spot where lay the unfortunate lad. It was indeed a melancholy sight: a cloth covered his body, which, on being removed, disclosed the dreadful state in which he had been rescued from the fangs of the monster. He was a handsome youth of fourteen or fifteen, and even in death his features preserved their beauty, which was not marred by that livid ap-

pearance which the "grim visitant" stamps on the pale countenance of the European. On one part of the head the white skull was visible: a little further back a contusion, from which the black gouts of blood were slowly trickling, and which, falling drop by drop, had already formed on the ground a small conical and congealed mass, sufficiently shewed where he had, with unerring aim, received his beath-blow. The chest and ribs were crushed in, and the lacerated state of one arm bore witness to his having been carried some distance in the jaws of the monster. Near the body, and closely enveloped in her duputtah, sat a woman, who was pointed out to us as his mother: a monument of silent grief, she stirred not, spoke not, but kept her eyes intently fixed on the sad spectacle before her, which, by the preparations going on to erect a funeral pile, was shortly to be committed to the flames.

This was enough to put us all on our mettle, and, vowing to revenge the poor lad, we pushed on through the jungle towards the hill, followed by a crowd of natives, who were all anxious to see the termination of the adventure in the death of their long-dreaded enemy. They required no urging, and, spreading right and left, beat on manfully towards the rock, thumping tom-toms,* and occasionally letting off a matchlock to increase the din. Suddenly a deafening yell announced that our game was afoot: he had been roused by the beaters close under the hill, to which he had slowly and threateningly retired.

The jungle here was so thick and high that the elephants made but little progress through it. We, however, at last succeeded in gaining a tolerably open space

* A sort of drum used by the natives at their festivals.

near the foot of the hill, about sixty or seventy yards up whose acclivity and on a level piece of rock we first viewed the "phantom," which had then more the appearance of an embodied evil spirit than a silent gliding ghost. Stung to madness at being deprived of his prey, and irritated by the noise of the beaters, he had apparently determined to come to a stand, and shew fight in this his last stronghold. He was pacing to and fro on the narrow ledge, occasionally crouching down, then, starting on his feet, appeared to be lashing himself with his tail into ungovernable fury.

As the elephants emerged from the covert, we had time to witness these antics, and immediately drew up and gave him a broadside, but apparently without effect, as he still maintained his position. L——'s first barrel had missed fire: he pulled the second trigger, and as this

discharge took place after we had brought our pieces from our shoulders, we could observe its effects. The bullet struck under his feet, and, rebounding, glanced off from the rock immediately in his rear. The music of this must have rather astonished him, as he immediately abandoned his conspicuous situation and slunk under covert. It was impossible to ascend the hill with the elephants; therefore, dismounting and reloading, we made for the place he had disappeared at, followed by all the villagers, who appeared intent on revenging their former injuries. With much difficulty we penetrated as far as the spot where he had last been seen, but here lost all traces of him. In vain we clambered over the surrounding rocks, and made our way through the thick and entangled briers. It was evident that this remote and almost inaccessible rock was the resort of numerous wild beasts, and,

if other evidence had been wanting, the rank and peculiar smell with which the close air was impregnated at the entrance of the various fissures of rock on the side of the hill sufficiently proved their vicinity. For a long time we continued indefatigable in our research, till at last, discouraged by the fruitlessness of our attempt, we returned to our elephants, and, disappointed, weary, and hungry, we did not reach our encampment till a late hour in the afternoon.

Next day, what was very unusual at this time of the year, the rain came down in torrents: we had placed scouts to give us the earliest intelligence of the tiger, and were impatiently awaiting the return of sunshine to mount our elephants, when the report of a shot was faintly heard in the distance; and shortly after one of the shekarees in breathless haste rushed up to the tent door, exclaiming, "Bagh ke

mara houn! bagh ko mara houn!" (I have killed the tiger! I have killed the tiger!) The poor fellow thought, probably, he was bringing us very joyful intelligence, and appeared much mortified when we received it with anything but approbation. True, he had rid the country of its terrible scourge; the "Phantom Man-eater" no longer existed; and the villagers could now without dread pursue their different vocations: still he had marred our expected sport, and we were selfish enough to regret his having done so. Nothing, however, remained but to put the best face on the matter, and make the most of the elephants and our remaining leave of absence. We accordingly remained at Goolencondah a few days longer, but without performing any exploit worthy of being recorded; and the weather had now become so grilling, that we were not sorry to find ourselves shortly

afterwards re-established in our old quarters in cantonment.

Before dismissing for ever these raw-scull-and-bloody-bone tales of tigers, (a name which an old Indian is now almost ashamed to pronounce,) I must relate one of the most daring and successful attempts at *muzzling* a man-eater to be met with in sporting annals.

On the high road between Madras and Hyderabad, and about sixty miles from the latter, is a small place called Nelcondah, situated in a narrow pass between two high hills. In the beginning of 182—, a tiger took up his residence in the abandoned old fort which crowns one of these eminences, and committed almost daily depredations on the numerous travellers passing on that much-frequented road. He at last carried his audacity to such a pitch as to walk off in broad daylight with an officer's servant from the midst

of a party of sepoys. On arriving at Secunderabad, his master, who was much attached to the poor fellow from having had him long in his service, related the circumstance, and Captain W——, of the Commissariat, determined on avenging his death.

W——. . . . . but why should I attempt any mystery in relating as gallant an action as was ever performed by a stanch votary of Nimrod! and such was Whistler, who will not, I am sure, feel annoyed in seeing his name recorded where it so well deserves a place. Well then, Whistler, who was no novice at this sort of work, immediately started off to the scene of action with a couple of friends. On arriving at Nelcondah, scouts were immediately placed on the look-out, one of whom shortly afterwards announced that he had discovered the retreat of the tiger, and led the party towards the top of the

hill. Here, amidst a chaos of large rocks, he pointed to a deep chasm, at the end of which was a recess, where he said the animal had retired. It was, however, impossible to get sight of him without first dropping down a height of sixteen or eighteen feet into the den below, from which there was no retreat. Whistler hesitated not, took the fearful leap, and, fortunately alighting on his feet, saw the monster quietly reposing at the further end of the den. He gave him no time to rise, but with the quickness of thought levelling his rifle, sent a ball through his brain, and extended him lifeless on the spot.

On our return from Goolencondah, the hot winds set in with unwonted severity. one blazing day in the month of April, whilst listlessly extended on my couch, inhaling the breeze through a wet cuscus tatty, a message from M—— requested my

immediate attendance. As he was only just recovering from the severe fever he had caught at the Perkhal Lake, I feared he might have had a relapse, and hastened immediately to his quarters. I found him, pale as death, standing in the verandah, beside a palankeen, to which he silently pointed, when what was my horror on discovering it to contain a human body in a complete state of putrefaction! The countenance black and distorted, and rendered still more hideous by an immense beard, prevented me at first from recognising in the bloated corpse before me our poor friend D——, whom we had left behind in the jungle, and who had fallen a victim to its deadly miasma. He had been attacked by the prevailing fever, whose increasing virulence at length obliged him to endeavour to reach the cantonment, from which he was still distant three days' march, when, without

medical assistance or medicines to alleviate his sufferings, he sank under the violence of the disease, and expired. The bearers had just arrived with the body, which, as before stated, was in a rapid state of decomposition. It was found impossible to remove it from the palankeen, in which it was carried the same evening to the burial ground. I had often attended to this last bourne many a departed friend, but never did I before witness its white obelisk-looking tombs, the green of its inclosing milk hedge, and tall fan-like palmyra trees, with such feelings of despondency as on the present occasion: and as the large white vultures sluggishly flapped their wings on the waving palm tops, the reflection naturally suggested itself of the greater probability of one day becoming their prey, to that of ever again revisiting my far distant native land.

Before concluding the present chapter,

it may perhaps afford some interest to the sportsman to be made acquainted with the different varieties of wild animals we fell in with during our expedition to the wilds of the Cummermait. Amongst the larger species may be reckoned the alligator, tiger, bear, spotted deer, wild hog, and the sambre or elk. We also got one or two specimens of the small hog deer, which appears to be a variety of the muska, having the long canine teeth peculiar to that race, though the animal in question was not larger than a hare. The *sambre*, which is erroneously called by us the elk, is a noble animal, with all the characteristics of the deer species. It is thus accurately described in the British Cyclopedia: —"The Samver of Bengal. *Cervus Aristotelis*. This species is met with in many parts of India, especially in the valley of the Ganges. Its characteristic distinction taken from the horns is that of having

the branch or second antler very far up upon the beam, and turned to the rear instead of forming a fork with the tip of the beam, as in most others of the group. The burr of the horn is very broad and pearled; the first antler is cylinder shaped, strong and straight, and stands nearly vertically upon it, measuring about ten inches in length; the beam bends from the back of it obliquely outwards, and to the rear, and with a sweep turns its point backwards; near the summit, or at more than two-thirds of its length, is the second posterior and internal branch, short and pointing upwards. In the British Museum there is a specimen measuring about twenty-three inches, which is very rugous and robust. The horns stand upon a broad and short pedicle; the face is straight, the nose pointed, the muzzle small, and the suborbital opening is very considerable. The ears are broad, with

white hairs standing up around the orifice; the tail is black, reaching half way down the ham, and is well furnished with hair; the throat and neck are covered with long, coarse, dark brown grey hair, reaching partially over the shoulders, susceptible of being raised like a lion's mane when the animal is excited. The shoulders, head, back, rump, and buttocks are dark brown in summer, and almost black in winter; outside of the ears, sepia; the belly, whitish, as also a ring round the nostrils and mouth, separated from the brown by a deeper shade, which spreads up the face; the inside of the limbs and legs, fawn colour, darker over the knees down the front; the breast is black. The male is nearly the size of the elk, *and indeed is so named in India by the British sportsmen.* They represent him as being excessively strong and vicious. Some of them on a shooting expedition had crossed

an arm of the Jumna to a woody island in quest of game; they were on the back of an elephant, and, entering the jungle suddenly, roused an old male of this species. On seeing the elephant, he started up with a long shrill pipe or whistle, which caused others to rise and dart into covert, while he stood at bay with his bristly mane on end in a most threatening attitude; but before the sportsmen could prepare proper shot, he wheeled round, and dashed through the underwood with the facility of a rhinoceros."

We also met with the large brown squirrel (*sciurus maximus*), the porcupine, and monkeys of several descriptions. The most remarkable was the black-faced monkey (*semnopithicus entellus*), very numerous in the depths of the forest, and displaying great agility in jumping from tree to tree, and making its way over the

thick canopy of lianes and creepers by which they were frequently united. These animals appeared to be held in high veneration by the Hindoos. We killed one specimen of the crested eagle, and several of the beautiful sultany bulbul, which is of the shrike genus, although from the above denomination they might be mistaken for the nightingale of Persia.

Spur, jungle, and pea-fowl were found in the greatest abundance; and I have no hesitation in saying that the admirer of primitive nature, the naturalist, and sportsman, will always feel amply repaid by an excursion to the "Deep Jungle."

CHAPTER IV.

SPENDING CHRISTMAS IN THE EAST — "THE LITTLE UNKNOWN" — BEDER — SPORTING OPERATIONS — "DRY SHOOTING" — THE BLUE PIGEON — THE WOLF — THE FLORIKAN AND BUSTARD — THE ROCK AND PAINTED PARTRIDGE — THE QUAIL AND PEA-FOWL — INDIAN HOSPITALITY.

"The hardy youth, who pants with eager flame
To send his leaden bolts with certain aim,
Must ne'er with disappointed hopes recoil
From cold and heat, from hunger and from toil;
Must climb the hill, must tread the marshy glade,
Or force his passage through the opposing shade;
Must range untamed by Sol's meridian power,
And brave the force of Winter's keenest hour."

PYE.

GENTLE, courteous, and affable reader, in all thy peregrinations through this world of care, has it ever fallen to thy lot to pitch thy tent under the shady boughs

of a mangoe grove in the fine clime of the Deccan, during the *genial* month of December? If thou hast not, vain were it for me to endeavour to describe our Christmas pastimes in the Far East, whilst leading the wild Bedouin-like life I was then accustomed to,—to convey to thy imagination our fairy cotton habitation, embowered amidst the dark and graceful foliage of the princely mangoe, at this time in all the pride of perfume and blossom, and spreading around a fragrance only equalled by the flavour of its delicious fruit. Such, at the time in question, the 25th of December, in the year of our Lord 182—, was the *locale* of a party of three as jovial and reckless young Subs as ever

"Spent half-a-crown out of sixpence a-day."

The time might be about "the curfew knell," when, after a hearty dinner, in

which antelope venison, curried into every possible shape, was the principal ingredient—(alas! for the honour of Old England, that we could muster neither the knightly sirloin nor rich plum-pudding)—we had our camp-chairs placed outside the tent, and prepared, with the assistance of the soothing cheroot and genial brandy-pawnee, to enjoy the serenity of the hour, and allow "digestion to follow appetite."

The night was cool, the atmosphere clear, the bright stars were twinkling in the blue ether above, and faintly, through the foliage, disclosed the dark towers of the once proud city of Beder, the distant and subdued hum of whose population, mingling with the shrill cry of the numerous tropical insects which seemed called into life by the serenity of the night, formed sounds which could not be deemed inharmonious by the most fastidious ears. The fairy illusion of the scene

was occasionally broken by the subdued whispers of our followers, who in detached groups were enjoying their simple evening meal; by the short neigh of the gallant steeds which were picketed around; or by the loud and joyous laugh of one of our own party, which completely knocked on the head all the romance of the thing. Before, however, we proceed any further, it may be requisite to explain to the uninitiated how it came to pass that we were thus spending our Christmas *al fresco*—puffing *backy* and swilling grog, to call things by their proper names.

Thanks to an indulgent commanding officer, a sporting party was formed every cool season, after the half-yearly inspections were over, and on the present occasion we determined to extend our peregrinations further than usual, visit Beder, Jaulnah, Aurungabad, the caves of Ellora, and return after making a circuit of seven

or eight hundred miles; and our pursuits being multifarious, we provided ourselves accordingly. Double-barrels and rifles were got out of the cases, hog-spears sharpened, portfolios stored with fresh drawing-paper, and, intending to combine *business* with pleasure, we made a joint-stock purse, and purchased a very fast pony called "The Little Unknown," who had carried everything before him at our station, and with which we hoped to make a little *batta* at Jaulnah and Aurungabad, where racing was at the time all the rage.

I cannot now refrain from saying a few words about one of the most extraordinary little animals I ever met with for speed and endurance, both of which he combined with the most unprepossessing appearance and diminutive size, being under 13 hands high, but which were the cause of his winning many a race before he was found out. For the sum of seventy

rupees, or about 7*l.*, he was purchased by an officer from a sepoy, whose wife and baggage he had been accustomed to carry, and to all appearance was a mere *tattoo;* rather a degrading epithet, bestowed on the common country ponies; and again, he was none of the handsomest of tattoos: of a light bay, almost approaching to dun, very long in the back, on which he had been severely fired for saddle galls, probably the result of the hard and heavy pack he had been used to carry, cat-hammed, and goose-rumped—such was the animal which beat some of the best horses at the station, until his great speed became so generally known that his owner could get no one to run against him, when he sold him to our sporting party for six hundred rupees. His fame had, however, reached Jaulnah before us: the sporting characters there, having heard of the prowess of "The Little Unknown," were

on their guard ; yet we managed nevertheless to get up a couple of matches, which he won. On our return from leave we raffled him ; I got the prize, and sent him to a friend in Bengal, where, under the name of " Young Nap," he won many a plate. With a feather weight on his back, " The Little Unknown" could do his half mile under fifty-six seconds. The year following I sent to my *Qui Hi** friend an Arab pony called " Diable," which, although for short distances not possessing the speed of the Mahratta, could beat him in heats, or on a mile and a half course. As an instance of the fidelity and attention of our Indian *saïces*, or grooms, the same man took both these ponies a distance of upwards of a thousand miles, through a most difficult coun-

* The Bengalees are so called in contradistinction to the people of the Madras and Bombay Presidencies.

try, where he had to ford all the numerous rivers which throw themselves into the Bay of Bengal, and where he did not meet with any European settlement for a couple of hundred miles together. With no other passport than a paper written in English, Hindoostance, and Telougou, containing the names of the different places he had to pass, did he each time return at the end of about three months, with the certificate of having safely handed over his charge to its new owner.

Should ever these lines meet the eye of my friend Carr, of Bengal sporting celebrity, they may perhaps recal to his recollection scenes of by-gone times and events long swallowed up in the past.

But return we to head-quarters, which for the present are in a mangoe tope,* near the good town of Beder. The general

* A *tope* means a grove, or any collection of trees.

plan of operations of our party was to rise at gun-fire, enjoy whatever shooting there might be in the neighbourhood of our "camp" (if we may so dignify our single and solitary tent) until the heat of the sun became unpleasant, when we mounted our nags, and with our greyhounds behind us, in case of falling in with any stray fox, fawn, or jackal on the road, we cantered merrily on to the next halting station, where we found a "bichover," or small breakfast-tent, ready for our reception, together with a substantial "hazree," to which, after a previous ablution in some neighbouring tank or "bowrie,"* we generally managed to do justice. I am fond of mystery, and shall therefore say nothing more about this said "hazree," but leave the uninitiated in the dark as to its signification. The day was spent in reading,

* Large wells generally cut out of the rock, and frequently met with in this part of the country.

drawing, or putting in order our "arms and appointments," until the afternoon, when we again sallied out with our guns, and returned to a seven-o'clock dinner, the labours of the day generally giving us a tolerable appetite both for our feed and sleep afterwards. Travelling in this manner by easy stages, on the fifth day, which happened to be Christmas, we reached the good town of Beder, in whose vicinity we encamped under the shady mangoe trees above-mentioned.

The day had been spent in "lionizing" the place, and our trouble was fully repaid. The town, which is about six miles in circumference, is built on a flat platform, which on the north ends abruptly with a sudden fall: it must at one time have been a place of considerable strength, having a deep outer ditch, scarped from the rocky soil, and being surrounded by lofty loop-holed walls and towers, which

are, however, fast crumbling to decay. In a like state of ruin, apparently aided and abetted by violence and the hand of man, is a noble building, which was once appropriated as a college of Seiks: on the ramparts are two remarkable pieces of ordnance, one a brass gun of the extraordinary length of twenty-eight feet, but of small calibre; the other a big-bellied iron monster, fifteen feet in length, but whose bore is capable of holding a moderate-sized man. Beder, after the Mahomedan conquest of India, was the seat of the Bhamenee Dynasty of Deccanee Sovereigns, the first of whom was Allah-ud-Deen Houssun Korgoh Bhamenee, A.D. 1347. During the reign of Aurungzebe, about the end of the seventeenth century, together with the other provinces of the Deccan, it was subjugated by the Moguls. In 1717, Nizam-ul-Mulk took possession of it, and it has ever since been

subject to the Nizams of Hyderabad. The Peshwar had always large claims for choute on this territory, which, when regularly paid, yielded seventeen lacs of rupees. When the British succeeded to the claims of the Mahrattas, the arrears had so accumulated, that in 1820 they amounted to two crones and a half of rupees. Beder is celebrated for its works of tutenac, an alloy of copper and zinc; of this, bowls and mouth-pieces for hookahs are manufactured, and richly inlaid with silver, which are much valued in every part of India. This part of the country being very high table land, water is only procured by sinking wells or "bowries" to a great depth in the solid rock. As they are perfectly level with the surface of the ground, and are to be met with in every direction, they are objects of considerable danger to any one riding fast across the country, particu-

larly in the vicinity of villages. These "bowries" afford an asylum to numerous colonies of the large blue pigeon, which build their nests in the cavities of the rock, and afforded us considerable sport and practice.

On discovering a "bowrie," we took up our posts; a man was sent to throw a stone into it, on which the birds came out, frequently to the number of ten or twelve, and, as they often rose singly, afforded us some excellent shots. The blue pigeon, which appears to be the stock from which our dovecots are supplied, is a strong large bird, and will frequently carry away a heavy charge of shot. Here, as in Southern India, the turtle dove is extremely common, nearly every bush being tenanted by its cooing mates, of which there are three species—the ringed dove, so common as a pet bird at home; the speckled-breasted one; and

a larger and less handsome sort, which is of one uniform colour: but the most beautiful bird of this species is the green pigeon; they are, however, extremely scarce, and from the similarity their plumage bears to the colour of the trees, in the highest branches of which they always take up their abode, it is difficult to discover them.

The magnificent tombs in the vicinity of Beder were also a great resort of our blue-coated friends. These palaces of the dead, which in Hindostan eclipse every building intended for the reception of the living, are constructed of the most costly materials, and tower to a great height. The birds build their nests in every part, both of the exterior and interior, of these sanctuaries, whose vaulted roofs often echoed to the reverberating sounds of our double-barrels, no doubt to the great surprise of their kingly occupants, who had long un-

disturbed slumbered beneath the black marble slabs on which in Arabic characters (and with all the high-flown ornament of Eastern metaphor) their numerous virtues were fully described for the benefit of a wondering and degenerate posterity.

On leaving Beder, and proceeding in a north-westerly direction towards the sacred stream of the Godavery, we entered a tract of country assuming an entirely new character. The nature of the ground no longer admitting of the cultivation of rice, and being divested of jungle, presented vast open spaces or *meidans*, covered at this time of the year with luxuriant herbage, and whose surface was dotted here and there with huge masses of dark rock.

Many is the time that, viewing a fox stealing over these *steppes*, we have laid in our greyhounds, and had a run which has taken us miles out of the direction of

our encamping ground; and more than once, tempted by the appearance of a solitary wolf stealing home from his nocturnal depredations at the grey dawn of morning, have we grasped our hog-spears, and, setting spurs to our steeds, commenced a pursuit, which, in this case, from the superior speed and bottom of the enemy, proved always unavailing. The manner in which this animal creeps over the ground is truly astonishing, and to his eager pursuers most provoking: confident in his superior powers, he never distresses himself, but generally keeps about a hundred yards a-head, regulating his motions by those of the sportsman, and either increasing or diminishing his speed so as to keep about this distance a-head of him; sometimes even carrying his coolness so far as to turn round his head and shew a most formidable set of grinders. We were all tolerably well

mounted, but our nags, even my stanch old hunter, "Lamplighter," invariably returned crest-fallen and dead beat from this unavailing pursuit. Our friend G—— was still more unfortunate; for, riding with more keenness than judgment, or over-rating the powers of his cattle, from the effects of some of these hard runs he lost his two horses in two successive days: one died at his pickets, and I was obliged to destroy the other. We were luckily able to mount him till he got re-horsed at Jaulnah, or he would have had to foot it for upwards of a hundred miles.

These plains abound in florikan and bustard. The former is a game-looking bird, about the size of the curlew. As dogs, from the difficulty of rearing or preserving them, are seldom used in dry shooting, and as "black pointers"—i. e., nigger-beaters, are not of much use in the open country, the following expedient

is frequently employed to put up the florikan: a long line is procured, to which at intervals are fastened the wing-feathers of any large bird; a few small bells are likewise attached to the rope, which, being extended, is dragged along the ground, the sportsman following in the wake. This crafty device was known to the ancients, and called the "pinnatum" and "formido." We read in Seneca, "when the line with feathers attached, enclosed large herds of wild animals that have been collected by stratagem, it is designated from its very effects, '*formido*' or 'terror.'" Hence we may conclude that the *formido* was not only used for the feathered tribe, but employed in the destruction of larger animals.

The Indian bustard is a fine bird, much larger than the common turkey, and of a most delicious flavour, but extremely shy

and difficult to get a shot at. The readiest way of approaching them is on a well-trained pony, by riding round them in decreasing circles, then making a dash, and when they rise, pulling up dead, and giving them a broadside of No. 2, lighter metal being generally thrown away upon them.

In these "prairies" we would sometimes stumble on a patch of cultivation, generally gram,* or some other hardy plant not requiring irrigation; and these spots were not unfrequently the resort of packs of rock pigeon, or, as they are sometimes called, rock partridge, as they partake in appearance of both, with a dash of the grouse, being feathered down to the toes. They are birds of passage, coming in after the rains, and emigrating on the approach of the hot season. To

* A sort of pea or vetch, on which the horses are fed.

this list may be added two or three kinds of plover; but these in India are always considered beneath the notice of the sportsman.

After crossing the Godavery, which ranks among the sacred streams of the Hindoos, we got into a more fertile and diversified country, and inhabited by a different genus of game. Our eyes now rested with pleasure on the green expanse of barley-fields, interspersed with the prickly oil plant or the graceful cholum; whilst the morning call of the painted partridge was to us music of the sweetest description. This fine bird as much exceeds the common brown one in beauty of plumage as it does in delicacy of flavour, and afforded us some capital sport. It is worthy of remark, that the "painter" not unfrequently roosts in the branches of trees, and thus often puzzles the novice, who, attracted by its call, is

assiduously prosecuting his search on *terra firma*, whilst his bird is comfortably perched aloft.

The cholum fields we generally found the resort of a remarkably fine sort of quail, nearly the size of the partridge, and the only one of the quail species on which we condescended to bestow a charge of shot, three other smaller kinds being more frequently found in the grass districts.

This cultivated part of the country was much intersected by wooded ravines, and, if a stream wended its devious way through them, was almost a sure find for pea-fowl; but the difficulty was to put up the rascals, as we would see them often emerging from one covert, and making across the open towards another with all the speed of a pursued ostrich, at the same time dazzling the eye with the brilliancy of their plumage. We at last learnt how to *sur*cumvent them. Return-

ing one evening about twilight, along the banks of a stream, after a long and unsuccessful pursuit, we were tempted by the clearness of the water to lave therein our weary limbs. The whirling eddies had worn out a deep pool under the overhanging bank, which was thickly overshadowed by the tall and flowery oleander, and in this delicious bath we were luxuriously cooling our fevered frames, over which *fizzingly* flowed the cool waters of the brook, when we were suddenly startled by a whirring sound over head, and a whole covey of pea-fowl passed above us and settled in some trees on the opposite bank of the rivulet. Favoured by the twilight, fast verging into darkness, we seized our guns, and wading across, sent a volley into their roosting-place, which proved so well directed, that, "thick as leaves in Vallambrosa's shades," the ground was strewed with

killed and wounded, amongst whom we immediately rushed, and in spite of the thorny nature of the jungle, and being ourselves *in puris naturalibus*, we succeeded in capturing two or three of the latter, to say nothing of those who had been "kilt dead" on the spot. In any place frequented by pea-fowl it is easy to discover their nightly place of resort, and, if a sporting conscience will admit of the expedient, to "pot" a few in the manner described.

I think I have mentioned most of the game which comes under the head of "dry shooting," except hares, (rabbits I never met with in India;) they are numerous, vary little from the English species, and frequently added to our bill of fare in the shape of stews and curries.

During the whole march, we depended much on our guns for the supply of the table, nor had we generally reason to

complain of our fare, nor of the contents of our bags, when sunset warned us to "cease firing," and we would halt near some village "bowrie" to cool our parched lips, and take an account of the slain. The "bowrie" had, moreover, other attractions besides the cool and refreshing draughts with which it supplied us. We read in the Scriptures of the women daily going to the well at the evening hour to fill their pitchers: to this day the old patriarchal custom is followed in all the East, and often, after a grilling day's shooting, have I at sunset sat on the steps of a tank, and enjoyed the cooling influence of the hour, till the golden hues of heaven melted into the sober grey of twilight, in admiring, not the fair, but *fairy* and graceful forms of the dusky village nymphs employed in this domestic vocation. Many of the Hindoo women (colour excepted) present the *beau ideal* of

female beauty—the long flowing hair, the large and melting eye, the well-formed nose and mouth, the graceful neck, and a bust . . . but here we must stop, and throwing the waving snow-white "douputtah" over the left shoulder, to conceal charms which it half discovers, we wind it round her slender waist and well-rounded hips, and allowing it to descend half way down the leg, the simple toilet of the "Hindoo girl" is complete, who, in point of grace and loveliness, might vie with the gorgeous jewelled and more artificial beauties of a European saloon.

About a month's easy marching, with occasional halts wherever we found game plentiful, brought us to the Field Cantonment of Jaulnah, a good specimen of an Indian out-station. The force was composed of three regiments of Native Infantry, the Second Light Cavalry, and a troop of Horse Artillery, who, as they drew field batta, were always required to

have their full equipment of tents, baggage bullocks and camels, and to be ready to march at a moment's notice. In fact, the force is supposed to be in camp, and to live in their tents; and though these have been gradually superseded by more substantial edifices, the form and construction of the latter still bear evidence to their original purpose—viz., that of covering in a tent during the rainy season. In time, the primitive habitation of canvass falling to pieces, or being packed up, what was at first intended as a mere shell, finishes by doing duty as a permanent habitation, and, improved and embellished by each occupant, is at last metamorphosed into a very respectable "bungalow." From such a humble origin sprung the flourishing Cantonments of Jaulnah,* Bolarum, and Secunderabad,

* Since the period here alluded to, Jaulnah has, I understand, been abandoned, and the houses at present are heaps of ruins.

the latter of which is to this day designated by the natives as the "lushkur," or camp.

Jaulnah being on the borders of the Bheel country, some precautions were requisite to guard against the depredations of these professional robbers, who frequently made the most daring attempts both on public and private property. Some time before our arrival, they had both robbed and murdered a very fine young man, Lieutenant D——, of the Company's Service. This officer, in order to relieve the wants of his family at home, had sold off everything, even to his house, and was living in his tent. One night he was aroused from his sleep, and saw some Bheels making very free with his little remaining property: he was a powerful man, and, jumping up, endeavoured to secure one of the offenders, who, although perfectly naked, and, as is their custom

on such occasions, well smeared with grease or oil, he had secured, overpowered, and held on the ground; but before his servants could come to his assistance, the wretch repeatedly plunged his khunjur (dagger) into poor D——'s body, whom he left weltering in his blood, and who expired during the night. Such is the dexterity of these rascals in the *art* of robbery, that they have been known to steal the very sheets from under the person sleeping on them. This feat is said to be performed by gently tickling their victim with a feather, and gradually withdrawing a portion of the sheet every time he moves from the effect of this titillation.

The cantonment, or, as it is commonly called, the camp of Jaulnah, is the head quarters of the Light Field Division of the Hyderabad Subsidiary Force, which consists of a troop of Horse Artillery, a corps

of Light Cavalry, and three Native Infantry regiments. The lines are at a short distance from the old town and fort of Jaulnah, from which they are separated by a small river. This place, together with the district of Jaulnapoor, was ceded by the Mahrattas to the British government in 1803, and has subsequently been made over to the Nizam.

Indian hospitality is proverbial, and we experienced it to its full extent during our stay at Jaulnah. Invitations poured in upon us from the different messes, and even from private families with whom we had been previously unacquainted, and who appeared to vie with each other as to who should be most attentive to us strangers. We took up our quarters with Lieutenant, now Captain D——, of the twenty-eighth regiment of Native Infantry, from whom we experienced the greatest kindness; and glad am I to have this op-

portunity of expressing that even the universal obliteration "Time" has not been able to effacc from my recollection the remembrance of his hospitable attentions.

Fancying, probably, that we would be completely spoilt during our stay at Jaulnah, Colonel G——, the commandant, with the charitable idea, no doubt, of averting so dreadful a calamity, took the opportunity of humbling our pride by a severe *wigging*, which originated in the following circumstance:—Whilst we were in the Cantonment, the Second Light Cavalry was reviewed: as we wished to see the fun, we went on the ground, but, as travellers, unprovided with our traps, we appeared there in shell jackets. Colonel G——, with all the pomp and splendour of majesty, (he was, God knows why, surnamed the "*King of Prussia*,") surrounded by his brilliant staff, was com-

plimenting the officer commanding the Second on the performances of his corps, when, prompted by the demon Curiosity, we unfortunate knights of the shell jackets, most unadvisedly thrusting ourselves forward to catch a few grains of his majesty's eloquence, attracted the royal attention, and drew down his wrath on our devoted heads.

In vain would it be for me to endeavour to recal all that his majesty said to us unhappy delinquents; suffice it to remark, that the current of his angry wrath not only overwhelmed us with confusion, but even struck dismay into the listening audience. Though we might certainly have deserved this mark of attention, I beg at the same time to add, that had his Prussic acid been rather more universally distributed, Frederick the Great would not have incurred the reproach of making an invidious distinction between King's and

Company's officers, two of the latter being present in the same obnoxious dress, and one of them under the very same circumstances with our more favoured selves, to whom he shewed the most flattering partiality, in making us the exclusive objects of his marked attention.

But I am beginning to range rather wide of my subject, which I have no doubt the patient reader begins to find rather *dry:* I shall therefore bring to an end my lucubrations on "Dry Shooting," and, gentle, affable, and courteous reader, wish thee good night and pleasant dreams!

CHAPTER V.

THE CAMP — SPORTING CLUB — THE MARCH AND COUNTERMARCH — COMFORTS UNDER CANVASS — "WET SHOOTING" — INDIAN METHOD OF TAKING WATER-FOWL ALIVE — EVENING BEFORE THE BATTLE — THE INFERNAL BEVERAGE — THE STORM — GOLCONDAH — THE EUROPEAN HUSBAND-HUNTER'S CAREER IN INDIA — THE SPORTING CLUB.

"The tent of Alp was on the shore;
The sound was hush'd, the prayer was o'er,
The watch was set, the night-round made,
All mandates issued and obey'd."

SIEGE OF CORINTH.

It would be difficult for any one who has not visited the gorgeous East to form an idea of an Indian encampment—I mean, that of a large body of troops, with all their concomitants of camp followers, bazars, elephants and camels, bullocks and horses. Here war appears in all her

" pomp and circumstance :" she conceals her bloody hand under an embroidered mantle, and advances to the field of carnage like a bride decked for the altar.

In April, 1830, the large subsidiary force occupying the territories of the Mahomedan sovereign of Hyderabad was suddenly, though not unexpectedly, called into the field. Nasir-al-Dowlah, the successor of the old Soubadars of the Deccan, had not without opposition ascended the musnud* on the death of the old Nizam. His brother, Moubaras-al-Dowlah, was to him a constant source of trouble and uneasiness : ambitious, enterprising, and popular with the oumrahs, or nobles, he secretly encouraged every faction, and promoted every sedition which so frequently disturbed the city of Hyderabad.

The views of Moubaras were evident, and in the then disturbed state of things,

* Throne.

and in a country where might so often supersèdes right, he had every prospect of elbowing his brother off the throne. The latter, however reluctantly, (for the native jealousy of European interference is excessive,) was at last obliged to apply to the British resident for assistance against his rebellious brother, who had already entrenched and fortified himself in one part of the city, whence he hurled defiance at his liege lord.

It was on a beautiful night, at the close of a burning day in the month of April, that some half dozen of us were, after mess, enjoying the cooling breeze, *blowing a cloud* and sipping our *brandy-pawnee*, under some fine old tamarind trees which still retained their verdure in spite of the scorching land winds. There had been a pause in the conversation ; each appeared silently engaged with his own thoughts, either intently contemplating and mo-

ralizing on the burning end of his cheroot, the twinkling stars as they shone through the leaves overhead in all their tropical splendour, or on the numerous fire-flies which with scarce less brilliancy shot wildly through ether, like blazing meteors. All was hushed and quiet, save the subdued hum of voices from the distant bazars, when we were suddenly startled by the heavy tread of an European footstep on the gravel walk, and the rising moon presently shone on the erect figure of a soldier, who hastily approached with an orderly book.

"What's the matter now, Corporal?" at once burst from every mouth.

"Orders, Sir," replied he, gracefully bringing up the extended hand to the peak of his cap, at the same time tendering the orderly book.

"Here! you boy, Moushkil! Bring a lanthorn, you rascal, jeldée laon!"

A lantern was speedily brought; and orders they were, and no mistake. The force was to assemble in a mass of columns on the Grand Parade at two A.M; and the regimental orders further directed that we were to be formed in the barrack square an hour before that time. Three cheers immediately followed this intelligence: sleep was out of the question; it was already ten o'clock; therefore, after giving the requisite directions to the servants concerning tents, baggage, &c., it was voted *nem. con.* to continue our present campaign of cheroots and brandy-pawnee until it should be time to "strike our tents and march away."

The appointed hour at last arrived, and a full moon shone brilliantly on the assembled troops, who were in consequence enabled to occupy their respective places in the column with as much steadiness and precision as on a brigade field-day.

We mustered a regiment of light cavalry, one battalion of foot, and one troop of horse artillery, one European king's regiment, and four native corps; and were, moreover, to be strengthened by the Nizam's regular troops, and by the Madras European regiment, which happened at that time to be passing near the scene of action.

Some short time elapsed before we got "under weigh," and day just began to dawn as we forded the Moussa; during the rains, a deep and rapid torrent, furiously lashing the walls of Hyderabad, but at present scarcely more than a brook, and barely reaching the knees. Thinking we would of course encamp somewhere near the walls of the town, we were laying to our souls the flattering unction of escaping a hot march, having an early breakfast, and getting under cover before the setting in of the land winds, which generally commence about nine in the

morning. Our astonishment may therefore be imagined when, after crossing the river, our long, snake-like body slowly crawled along the walls, which it soon left behind, and gradually emerged into the open country to the eastward of the city. This was a puzzler! What *could* be the meaning of this extraordinary movement! but of course generals in command of armies do not make known by the town-crier their intended operations, and we were all lost in conjecture. We were passing over a plain, every inch of which I knew right well in my sporting capacity, and on which I had floored many a fine buck antelope and laid into many a fox. It therefore appeared to me rather novel to be travelling over my old haunts in such warlike trim: still we proceeded, till, leaving Aurungzebe's mosque in the rear, we got in sight of the ruins of Surroo-Nuggur, which I have described

on a former occasion. The column was winding along the narrow bund of a large tank; on our right extended a fine sheet of water, on which were idly floating numerous water-fowl; whilst on the left lay a vast extent of rice-fields, which derived their verdure from the noble reservoir above them, and promised from their appearance to be, even at this late season, the resort of lots of snipe.

"Should not mind being encamped near this tank," said one of my sporting chums, edging up to me.

"I reckon we'd soon have a touch at the long bills, Sib; and, youngster, you should wade in with your long legs after yonder teal, and supply the camp with water-fowl."

This is the famous Bāgh-Nuggur tank, where Sib, C—, and myself, have had such rare sport. As we were idly chatting thus, a halt was sounded; a bustle

seemed to take place amongst the staff, where they were evidently holding a consultation, which shortly broke up. The word was passed to countermarch by ranks, and then left in front; we trudged "back again" the way we had come—a *slight* mistake in the quarter-master-general's department having caused us to overshoot the mark, and go about five miles further than there was any occasion.

On these occasions grumbling is of little avail; therefore, putting the best face on the matter and the best foot forward, we bravely retraced our steps. The heat was becoming excessive, and ever and anon a sultry blast as from the mouth of a furnace would sweep over us, dry up the very moisture on our foreheads, and cheat us as it were of the credit of labouring by the *sweat* of our brow. To the *sportsmen* of the party—and in that gallant force there were many who could

boast of the name—an hour more or less in the sun was of little moment; he only gave us the *warm* reception of an old friend, to which our bronzed countenances bore ample testimony, and our mahogany faces could laugh to scorn his most powerful rays. But it was far otherwise with the poor soldiers — I mean, the Europeans.

Shut up all day in their barracks, they were little accustomed to this sort of work; and the perspiration in many cases not only appeared to have saturated the coat, but also their thick belts and appointments. Still their *pluck* never failed them.

"Bad luck to their sowls, Pat, to have brought us this thramp to bring us back again!" I overheard a young grenadier say, as he was pouring forth his lamentations into the ear of a grizzly old soldier, his front-rank man.

"Och! sure, Tim, ye'll be ne'er the

worse for it, for maybe it's not of wax ye're made; and I'll engage, boy, 'tis not of sugar," said Pat, at the same time laying hold of his proboscis between his finger and thumb.

But all in this world must have an end; and so, Inshah Allah! by the grace of God, had our grilling hot march. We at last arrived at our encampment-ground, which we had passed four long hours before: arms were piled, the tents were unloaded from the elephants and camels, and before an hour had elapsed a canvas city had arisen under the walls of Hyderabad; the bazaars were established, the mess-tent pitched, and, with a capital breakfast provided by our Parsee messman, we commenced our life in "camp."

When the fire-side traveller reads of the enormous masses of people put in motion on the march of an Indian army, he is apt to open the eyes of incredulity,

and, putting down the paper, to exclaim, "How these Anglo-Indians are addicted to——" we will not say what. But if in his sagacity he for a moment reflects that every officer is attended by at least a dozen servants, who in their turn are followed by their wives and children; that the sepoys are accompanied by their families; that a well-furnished bazaar is always attached to the camp, the grain and different articles with which it is supplied being carried by innumerable coolies,* bullocks, and waggons; if to this list be added the immense number of beasts of burthen for the carriage of tents, baggage, &c., the natives requisite to look after these, the Lascars, water-carriers, and dooly-bearers,* besides crowds of idlers and adventurers of every description,

* Porters.

† The dooly is a sort of covered litter, carried by four or six men, for the transport of the sick.

he will not overshoot the mark if to every ten thousand fighting men he puts down one hundred thousand camp followers.

Living under canvass is in India so common an occurrence, that a man's tent generally presents all the comforts of a Bungalow; the double walls keep off the glare of the sun, the ground, covered with a blue-and-red striped carpet, the camp-table and arm-chair, the bullock trunk bed, the fowling-piece and hog-spear lashed to the tent pole, your dogs lazily extended on the bed rug, give a *tout ensemble* of home and snugness which can scarcely be conceived. All these luxuries it may easily be imagined were not diminished by being so near head-quarters; and to guard against the excessive heat of the weather at this time of the year, most of us had taken the precaution to put in marching order our *tauny-catches*, with

their whole apparatus of cuscus-tatties and water-jars.

But to the uninitiated it may perhaps be necessary to explain these hard names. Know then, gentle reader, that during certain months in India it is literally *infernally* hot; to counteract which heat it was discovered that mats kept constantly moist were most effectual; the burning blast passing through these tatties of sweet-scented cuscus grass becomes a perfumed and cooling zephyr; and the dark naiads who perform the grateful office of sprinkling them with water, and who, by-the-bye, are often very pretty creatures in their way, are yclept, I know not wherefore, tauny-catches.

But even with the assistance of tatties and tauny-catches we found the heat far from agreeable: 110° may do very well for a Salamander, but is rather too much for mere man of mortal clay. We there-

fore held a consultation, at which it was decided that the tent of a rum chap, called Zoicles, should be made the general head-quarters, where all the water nymphs were to bring their supplies, and keep us from morning to night deluged with genial showers. This plan answered capitally, and never was time more pleasantly passed than in those dripping and bedrenched canvass walls. Immediately after breakfast it became the resort of every idler, and the scene of every sort of fun.

Cards, chess, eating and drinking, fluting and singing, in short, noise of every description, was the constant order of the day; and the Zoicles' hotel was so much in request, that not a corner remained unoccupied. A party would be frequently seen playing at some game *on* the table, whilst another set were similarly engaged *underneath*. Our host generally took possession of the camp-bed, whence he used to deafen us with his

flute; and I found the ground floor *under* him, with the assistance of a few gunny-bags,* made a capital berth, and by far the coolest corner in the shop.

Thus we used to pass our days till we sallied out in the cool of the evening; and whilst the higher powers were engaged in negotiations with Moubaras, or in mediating between him and his brother, we were discussing the probable chances of an attack on the town, the consequent plunder, with our respective chances or wishes, either of securing a good addition to our studs in the shape of a Kattywar horse, or a Circassian damsel from the seraglio of his highness. We had even proceeded to a mathematical calculation of the value of the different inmates of that sanctum; as, for instance, how many Ethiopians were equal to a Cachemerian; how many of the latter equivalent to a

* Coarse canvass bags in which the tent is packed on a march.

maid of Iran, a Circassian, or a Georgian. All these particulars being satisfactorily arranged, naught remained to be done save to follow Mrs. Glass's prescription of "first catch your hare, and then cook it."

Time, meanwhile, wore on apace; and as no immediate warlike demonstrations appeared to demand our presence, a party was formed for a day's shooting at the Bāgh-Nuggur tank. This gives me an opportunity of describing the general system of *wet-shooting* in the Deccan, which the reader may remember came in a former chapter under one of the heads of "Field Sports."

As this part of the country is, generally speaking, of a broken and undulating nature, an opportunity is thereby offered of forming tanks or reservoirs of water, which, being filled during the rainy season, contain a sufficient supply for irrigating

the neighbouring fields during the rest of the year. An artificial embankment or *bund* being thrown up across a valley, the water accumulates behind this, and thus are formed the tanks, which in extent sometimes rival small lakes. The lesser ones are formed of a common embankment of earth; but the bunds of the larger ones, and which are frequently as much as a mile in length, are generally of very ancient and solid construction, large blocks of granite being cut to fit into each other, in what is called in Greece the Cyclopian style of architecture. This faces the water, whilst a shelving bank gradually extends towards the rice-fields, which are invariably on the other side. Of this nature was the bund of the tank of Bägh-Nuggur.

On arriving there our party separated, some intending to wage war on the water-fowl, whilst the rest extended over the

rice-fields in quest of snipe. The former placing themselves at intervals in ambush along the several sides of the bund, a number of natives were sent round the tank with instructions to make as much noise as possible, throwing stones, firing off pistols, &c., in order to make the birds rise. We had not been long at our posts when, with the assistance of our noisy *black guards*, a fine flock of teal came whirring over our heads. Bang! bang! went at once from three or four barrels, and the killed and wounded fell thickly around, some into the adjacent rice-fields, others into the tank, where the main body at last settled, was again disturbed as before, and a new slaughter ensued. This went through two or three editions, till at last the survivors, finding the place too hot for them, made a clear start for some other sheet of water.

And now came the cream of the fun—

that of securing the wounded birds which had fallen into the water, and which, by diving as soon as they saw the flash of the pan, often avoided the effects of a second shot. At first, as is generally the case, we did not like to wet our feet, and kept up a desultory fire from the shore; however, in less than half-an-hour, not one of us but what was in the water, which, in the present state of the weather, made a capital tepid bath, and which at this season, not being very deep, enabled us to follow the fugitives in all directions. Still an unfortunate wight would sometimes flounder into a muddy hole, where, after being immersed over head and shoulders, he would reappear much in the guise of a drowned rat, and to the great amusement of the rest of the party.

The natives have rather an ingenious way of taking water-fowl alive. In the tanks frequented by them they throw

large earthen vessels, which, floating about in the water, the birds become accustomed to their appearance, and swim about them without apprehension. When the shekaree finds that they venture near them with confidence, he places one on his head, which is thereby completely concealed, holes having been bored for him to breathe and see through. With this novel head-dress he gets up to his neck in the water, gradually approaches the spot where is cruising the fleet of duck or teal, who, accustomed to the sight of the earthen jars, do not take the alarm even when it is in the midst of them. Now is the time for the shekaree, who seizes his unsuspicious victims by the legs, drags them under water, till one by one they disappear, their remaining companions being perfectly ignorant of their fate and of their own approaching destiny.

In India the tribe of water-fowl is very

extensive, and affords great scope to the sportsman. In the more unfrequented parts of the country the tanks are often literally covered with birds, and it is no uncommon circumstance to bring down at a single shot from one to two dozen. The teal and widgeon are in great varieties, more so than the duck; but of the latter are some with the most beautiful plumage. The largest is the Braminee duck: it is of a dark yellow-ochre colour, generally found in the sandy beds of rivers, extremely shy, and difficult to get within shot of; and when you have brought him down he is not worth having, tough as leather and fishy as a gull.

The marshes and sedgy banks of the tanks abound with cranes and herons of every description, the grey-and-white curlew, the lotus bird,* water-hens, and divers innumerable, complete the list; but

* This beautiful bird has been described in a former chapter.

they are all beneath the notice of the sportsman, and only sought after by the bird-fancier, to whose collection they make brilliant additions.

Now cast we a glance at what is allowed to be the best and one of the most exciting sports of the East—I mean, snipe shooting. In its effects it is also the most fatal to the British sportsman. A burning sun over head, whilst for hours immersed above the ankles in water, together with being exposed to the noxious marshy exhalations, have, alas! proved fatal to many, and have probably added more greatly to the numerous cases of fever, liver complaint, and dysentery, than anything else in the treacherous climate of India. Still with this hand-post of "high road to the other world" full in view, such are the attractions of this pursuit, that few who are fairly engaged in it can ever leave it off, until brought suddenly

up by one of the above stumbling-blocks. It becomes a sort of infatuation. With his brandy-flask by his side, and his well-filled bag, the sniper still wanders through his old haunts, the well-known Paddy-fields,* until at last brought down himself by the unerring aim of the grim Azrael —the angel of death.

I am well aware that in advocating these opinions, in stating the fatal effects of snipe-shooting, I expose myself to the serious charge of apostasy, and of becoming a renegade to the sport, by many a grim, mahogany-faced old brother sportsman, who may indignantly exclaim, "Begone! go handle thy goose-quill, break the stock of the old double barrel; thou art no longer one of *us!*" Still, old varmint, facts are facts, and will speak for themselves; and though thy tough leathern

* The swampy fields where rice is cultivated are so called.

carcass has hitherto been impervious to heat or damp; liver or fever, thou must remember how many a boon companion we have seen put under the sod!

The only time when this amusement can be pursued with tolerable safety is early in the morning. The birds are then wild, and difficult to bring down; but as the heat increases they lie closer, and when the sun darts down his rays with their full power, they become so lazy that they may almost be kicked up. Any one who has ever drawn a trigger may therefore easily imagine, that whatever good resolutions may be formed at starting by a keen sportsman are easily broken through when he finds his sport augment with the thermometer, in the same ratio that the size of his game-bag swells with the increased power of the sun's rays. The moment of striking work is from time to time put off, until the shades of even-

ing see him return laden with 30 or 40 couple of birds, and he probably barely arrives in time for dinner, when he had ordered breakfast at nine o'clock. Such is too frequently the manner in which good resolutions are kept.

We have three different sorts of snipe; the common brown one, about the size of the English snipe; the little Jack snipe, rather a difficult shot; and the painted snipe. This is a lazy, sluggish bird, rises heavily, and generally settles within a few yards, amidst the tall sedge grass and reeds, which they frequent in marshy places. There is nothing *game* either in their flavour or appearance, but their plumage is handsomely variegated, and thence they derive their name.

Frequently the slaughter committed by a sniping party is so great, that when too far from any station to which the birds might be sent in, nothing but the brains

and trail are eaten, the rest being cast away. This is often made a matter of boast, but I must confess I rather look on it as an act of wanton destruction.

Such was not, however, the fate of the game of our Bagh-Nuggur party, for although we brought in our quantum, it was soon distributed amongst our numerous friends, who crowded to Zoicle's tent, where we had all assembled—the shooting party to get some grub, our visitors to inspect the bags, and to disburthen themselves of the news of the day.

We first satisfied the cravings of appetite, and then had leisure to listen and descant on what was communicated to us, which amounted to the fact that Moubaras, finding he could gain no more time by negotiation, had peremptorily refused to accede to the terms offered to him by the high mediating powers, who had resolved to give him until the following day

for consideration, and if he still proved refractory, to breach the walls, and take the place by storm. The signal to be a gun fired at 1 P.M. next day.

To a party of jolly sportsmen, after a hard day's fag in the hot winds, few persuasions are required to pay every devotion to the rosy god, and the present occasion afforded additional inducements to fill the "brimming bowl." Amongst the numbers present were many whose post on the following day would be with the leading column of attack; their success and escape was deeply drank to, and as bravely answered. Life has few such exhilarating moments as these, and whilst it lasted we were determined to make the most of it, on the principle of "eat, drink, and be merry, for to-morrow we die." This doctrine may be heterodox, but we left this to churchmen to decide, nor troubled our heads about such nice points.

It is at such moments as these that the true character of man shews itself in its real colours, and all his nobler points are brought to light. Poor old Radford! never shall I forget on that eventful evening the gripe of thy iron fist, as thou madest the promise to stick by me on the ensuing day, with thy old double-barrel gun. Radford was our assistant-surgeon, a stanch sportsman, always foremost in a spree of this kind. He had been employed in the Nizam's service. On one occasion a refractory Kelladar (governor of a fort) was to be reduced to obedience; there was no other European officer on the spot; in spite of his medical capacity, he put himself at the head of fifty souwarees, (horsemen,) galloped up to the gate of the fort, blew it open with a petard, and put the garrison to the sword. Innumerable were the exploits related of him in the destruction of tigers, and *sa-*

bering (not spearing) of wild hog—for Radford was too modest ever to mention his own performances. In health, a boon companion; in sickness, attention and kindness personified; he was the prince of good fellows, the king of *leeches*. But, alas! he is now no more.

The evening thus passed, as the papers say, with the greatest conviviality—i. e., most of us were three sheets in the wind. At last, Jones, our lieutenant of Grenadiers, stood up, or rather attempted to stand, and to make a speech, the purport of which was, that this being an extraordinary occasion, deserved to be drank in an extraordinary manner, and in some unusual beverage. The motion was carried *nem. con.*, and the proposer was put in the chair, with full powers to concoct any brew he thought proper, which we pledged ourselves to drain, provided he shewed the example.

He immediately set to work, and never did human invention produce such a mixture. A large bowl was filled with madeira, port, claret, beer, brandy, and arrack, spiced with kyan and black pepper, sent to be boiled, and brought in steaming hot. The most copper-throated were appalled, but there was no drawing back; bumpers were filled—not puny wine-glasses, but thundering big rummers; our only hope was that the worthy president would not come to the scratch. Alas! vain, delusive hope.

"Here's to success for to-morrow!" cried he, and at one long pull down went a whole pint of "infernal," as we had already christened this Circean draught. It would have been high treason to have fought shy: but this was the end of the feast; many were completely floored, and others had just sense enough left to make a timely retreat. The Doctor, young

Smithwaite, and myself were among the latter; they shared my tent, to which we managed to steer our course. On emerging into the open air, we were struck by the unusual appearance of the atmosphere; there was not a breath of wind; a mass of heavy black clouds seemed to rest like a leaden mantle on the very tents, which were brought out in strong relief on the dark background of murky vapour. A few heavy drops of rain, at long intervals between them, was all that disturbed the unnatural stillness which reigned around; when

"From camp to camp, through the foul womb of night,
The hum of either army stilly sounds,
That the fixed sentinels almost receive
The secret whispers of each other's watch."

In short, everything seemed to prognosticate one of those violent and sudden storms which, though seldom, *do*

sometimes visit these regions during the hot season.

We roused our people, and with directions to secure the tent as well as possible, turned in to await the event; nor were we long kept in suspense; the rain came down in torrents, and after having saturated the ground, and loosened the tent pegs, was followed by a whirlwind which soon laid in the mud half the tents of the encampment. The ground we occupied happened to be some dried up rice fields, which in the course of half an hour became a complete swamp, and presented a scene of inexplicable confusion. Thanks to the precautions we had taken, the tent occupied by us still held its own; but how long it might continue to do so was uncertain. We were, besides, in utter darkness; for a single instant a vivid flash of lightning lit up the scene, and made everything visible as broad noon-day. Never

shall I forget what that single flash disclosed. On a mattress in one corner lay young Smithwaite; with his clothes on, and rolled up in his boat cloak, reposed the Doctor; whilst coolies, servants, and tauny-catches, who had by degrees crept in for shelter, were huddled together in every variety of attitude and costume.

"Nice work this, Radford!" cried I.

"Ah! my dear fellow, these things will happen in the best regulated families; let us try to sleep whilst the tent stands."

Thanks to the dose of *infernal*, I for one was able to follow his advice; and on awaking in the morning, our tent was found standing unscathed amidst a multitude of wrecks.

But to cut short a long story, our redoubted opponent, thinking discretion the better part of valour, refused next day to come to the scratch, struck his colours, quietly went off to the fortress of Golcon-

dah, we as quietly marched back to cantonment, and thus terminated a most pleasant and bloodless campaign of ten days, which served to initiate the youngsters to a few of the mysteries of "life in camp."

The fortress of Golcondah* lies about five miles to the north-west of the city of Hyderabad, and is the place of safety where the treasures of the Nizam are commonly deposited. Though having no particular claims to be considered a place of any great strength, it is so jealously guarded, that an European is, under no pretext, ever suffered to enter its precincts; and instances have occurred of parties of officers who had come to spend the day amongst the neighbouring tombs having been fired at from the walls of the fort,

* This place is by some considered as the locale of the famous diamond mines, so much celebrated of old. They were, however, situated somewhere on the coast to the north of Masulipatam.

for having presumed to approach them too nearly. "*A la distance*," we had, however, often an opportunity of beholding this hermetically-sealed abode of wealth and power, as a favourite resort of our sporting parties during the hot weather was the neighbouring "tombs," whose massive vaulted domes, whilst they gave us abundance of shelter from the burning rays of the sun, served as a retreat for the numerous flocks of blue pigeons, amongst which we used to make great havoc, and which afforded capital practice to keep our hands "in."

The reader may wonder at our taking up even a temporary abode amongst "tombs," and may, perchance, connect with such a place of residence many gloomy associations; but in the East, and more particularly in the Mahomedan portion of it, whilst the living inhabit hovels, the most magnificent abodes are

erected for the resting-places of the departed, on which no expense is spared; and the beautiful Arabesque style of architecture, with its light and fantastic ornaments, exhausts its most elaborate efforts on the "khubbers" and "musjeds," the mausoleums of the departed, and the hospitals for the soul. In short, the places of sepulchre and the mosques outshine, in point of beauty and grandeur, every other Eastern architectural edifice, and vie with each other in point of magnificence.

Amongst the most beautiful of the former may be reckoned the tombs of Beder and those at Golcondah; the first have already been described, and the latter are even on a greater scale of magnificence. Flights of broad granite steps lead to an elevated platform, on which stands the body of the building, surrounded by an open verandah, entered by

arches of the Moorish or Saracenic shape, and supported by massive square pillars, whose surmounting architecture is crowned by the most highly-finished Arabesque work, executed, generally, in the beautiful Chunam, or fine preparation of shell-lime, which, in polish, hardness, and purity of colour, can almost vie with the whitest Parian marble.

Crossing this verandah, you penetrate into the sanctum itself; and here, under a black marble slab, in the centre of the edifice, reposes some scion of the Kootub Shahee dynasty, whose many virtues are duly placed on record in the Arabic language, and beautifully executed characters, raised in basso relievo, and intermixed with appropriate sentences from the Koran; over-head is a reverberating dome, of great height, which returns, with deafening loudness, every sound uttered within the sacred precincts, and

whose exterior, formerly covered with those beautifully-coloured glazed tiles for which the Mahomedans were always famed, still exhibits a few remaining ones, which, glittering in the sun-beams, are striking evidences of former grandeur and present decay.

The above description will, I should think, answer, with little variation, for the seventeen or eighteen of these magnificent abodes which now constitute all that remains of a fallen dynasty.

During the hot weather, as has been said, these were the favourite resorts of our sporting characters; and when the land-winds were baking the very ground beneath our feet,—for the minor vegetation, under its scorching influence, speedily disappears,—we would, with our double-barrels on our shoulders, and equipped in our broad straw hats, shirts,

light silk or muslin "piejāmāhs,"* and turned-up Moorish slippers, stroll from tomb to tomb, disturb the large "khubouters" (pigeons) which snugly nestled in their sheltered recesses, and bang away at them as they winged their arrowy flight through the Moorish arches of the building. Many is the bag of "blue coats" we have thus filled, and many the dish of "pigeon curry" have we dispatched whilst seated around the tomb-stone of the great Abdallah-Kootub-Shah—may his soul be revelling amidst black-eyed Houries in the seventh paradise!

* The Hindostanee appellation for very light and loose drawers, much worn both by day and night, particularly in the hot weather, in India. So much had I become accustomed to these appendages to sleep in, that after my return home I continued the use of them until my whole Indian stock was exhausted, and then, for a considerable time, felt very uncomfortable without them.

With the assistance of the tombs of Golcondah, the ruins of Surroo-Nugger, an occasional run for a little hog-hunting to the neighbourhood of Beder, lots of cuscus tatties and tauny-catches, the hot weather was usually passed pleasantly enough at Hyderabad; particularly as the coolness of the nights enabled you (by sleeping under canvass) to obtain, generally, a good night's rest, a luxury only appreciated when not to be attained, and the value of which is most fully known by those whose ill-fortune has condemned them to a protracted residence on the Coromandel side of India.

But the slowest and heaviest part in bright Phœbus's race-course was the commencement of the rains, which prevented any out-of-door work; whilst the usual excessive sultriness attending them effectually put a stop to our later resources, of masquerades, public balls, and

parties, which were ushered in as soon as the cool weather restored a faint blush of health to the fair (not to say *pale* creatures) who gloried in the name of daughters of Britain, and who appeared merely to endure a sort of passive existence in these sun-burnt regions.

There are of course exceptions to every rule; but, generally speaking, the land of "Ind," which has so often proved the cradle of the most renowned heroes, statesmen, and capitalists, to say nothing of first-rate "sportsmen," is certainly not favourable to those delicate flowers, the fairest, and I believe the *best* of the creation—"Albion's lovely blue-eyed maids."

Transplanted into this foreign soil, the blooming blossom soon fades, loses its roseate hue of health, and from the beautiful bud, whose delicate though healthy tints could vie with those of Iris, it as-

sumes a pale, wan, and sickly appearance, with scarce remaining energy to raise its languid and drooping head.

The plant (mind, reader, we are only alluding to a plant, though perhaps rather a sensitive one,) suffers in "morale" as well as "physique." Its professed object in visiting this far clime is paternal or sisterly affection, whilst the never-failing *imputed* motive, for which the good-natured world invariably gives credit, is—"matrimony."

This may be a libel; however, for a moment we will suppose it to be true that the fair young creature, (we will drop our metaphor) just from school, and full of health, hope, and animal spirits, *is* brought out by her friends on *spec.* She crosses the surf at Madras—she launches at once into the vortex of gaiety, is universally admired, overwhelmed with attention by

young and old, by soldiers and civilians, by titled and untitled, from the bilious-looking old parchment-faced, shrivelled atomy of a general, or civil contractor, to the gay young writer, and ruddy-cheeked, beardless *griff* of an ensign.

From having flattery constantly dinned in her ears, the poor girl's head (naturally none of the strongest) is at last completely addled; she begins to believe she must really possess all the perfections attributed to her; and from being so often told that she is an angel, verily thinks herself a little goddess, a complete pocket Venus.

She is now the toast at Madras; no party is endurable without the fascinating Miss ——; but she now begins to look rather high in the way of *establishment*, and though the poor young devil would no doubt rather be having a game at romps with yon chubby-faced griffin,

whose admiration alone, unaided by any other exertion than that of the eyes, is making the big drops trickle down his smooth rosy face, "Ma" says, she must not stand up to dance with any one under the grade of a field officer or a civilian of rank, who may be able to give her the three Indian requisites for married life—"a silver tea-pot, a bandy,* and a set of palankeen bearers;" and the yet unsophisticated creature is dancing her hair out of curls and herself out of breath with some spindle-shanked, nankeen-breeched old fellow, who does not nor cannot shew a particle of warmth either in manner or person, his mind having for the last twenty years been wholly engrossed by rupees, his shrivelled carcass, during nearly the same period, being denied the benefit of even (to use a delicate

* Anglice, a two-wheeled vehicle, called a *gig*.

expression) a common perspiration,* and whose sole recommendations are his brass spurs and starred epaulettes.

This state of things continues two or three years; after which she begins to find that these dried-up old stock fish are out of their griffinage, that they can nibble the bait without swallowing the hook. The sweet Matilda looks every day more pale, bilious, and interesting—she has lately had one or two twitches in the side, (query, the right or left?) sure

* Sir Thomas Munro, the late Governor of Madras, and who was rather "rude in speech," said, in reply to a pert young griffin, who, whilst busily swabbing up the big drops from off his dripping forehead, and remarking to his Excellency on the extreme heat of the weather: Yes, young man, but after you have been a few years in the country, you will think yourself devilish lucky if you have so much as a *sweat* left in you; so now you had just better keep your breath to cool your *soojee*, (a sort of porridge frequently put down for breakfast.)

symptoms of liver; and her affectionate friends, ever regardful of her health, recommend an immediate change of air up the country, the real object of which is to try for a fresh and better market. She languidly stretches herself in her palankeen, and in due time reaches, we will say, (to give a local habitation to our story,) the gay station of Hyderabad.

But *big wigs* are more scarce here than at the Presidency, all the field officers are horrid married men, and she is fain to stand up in the mazes of the quadrille with some respectable-looking, portly old captain. But even captains are not catchable every day; she bobs away at them for a couple of years without success; then, in despair, tries *another* change of air higher inland; and here, at last, as a forlorn hope, takes unto herself some red-nosed Sub, who, tired of brandy-pawnee, is determined to try an antidote to drink

in the shape of a wife; to reform and *live honest*.

Time silently wings on his never-halting course; a few years have passed over the fair Matilda, and we behold her surrounded by squeaking little *red-noses* and screeching ayahs;* the once admired "toast" of the Presidency, now a care-worn mother, slip-shod and badly dressed, with sorrow and want marked on her pallid brow, and an unhappy and discontented husband at her elbow.

This may be a gloomy picture, but it is, alas! too often a true one, of many a girl's fate in these *Heastern Hingies*.

But we have shot wide of our mark; commencing with the amusements and *pleasures* of this world, and finding ourselves at last entangled in the meshes of matrimony! — "*Où en étions nous?*"

* Native nursery-maids.

Oh! at our occupations during the rains. At this period, the idler found a great resource in the billiard-table, of which there were two or three attached to the different messes; but the one most frequented was a public one, kept by an old Parsee of the name of Bomanjee, and of whom honourable mention has already been made.

Old Bomanjee possessed one of the few up-stairs houses in the cantonment, in the lower part of which he had his shop, containing an assortment of the most medley description, and comprising every different article from every different quarter of the globe. But where old Bomanjee shined, was in the upper regions of his mansion—in his holy of holies—the billiard room. Here the old fellow would be ever ready to make either a bet, a joke, or a match with any one; and as he had a long head and a sharp

eye, a ready wit, and knew, moreover, every cushion of his table, few had a chance with him in either of these competitions. He always here threw off his official character of a shopkeeper; to his particular friends he would often produce some capital brandy or liqueurs, which he pronounced a sovereign remedy for all diseases, even including liver; and those from whom the longest bills was due were perfectly safe from a "dun" on entering the precincts of his sanctum.

Sometimes he would surprise delinquents at their own quarters, and his usual time was their breakfast hour, and the day on which pay was issued; but his importunities were always so good-humoured, and his jokes and bills always flew so well in company, that if there *was* a rupee in the house he was sure to get it; and if such a thing were not forthcoming, he would utter some witticism, which ap-

parently consoled him for his want of success.

One of my friends was very often deep in Bomanjee's books, and I believe frequently remained so intentionally, in order to have an opportunity of receiving a "dunning" visit from the old man. On one of these occasions, after many good things had been mutually said, and old Bomanjee, with his long bill in his hand, had quietly taken up his position on the couch, my friend took up his pen and wrote, impromptu, the following parody:—

PAY DAY.

I.

"'Tis sweet the 'Dun's' approach to hear,
As slow and stately, drawing near the door,
Chiming sweet music on the ear
Of him in *bills* most rich—in 'abstract' poor.
When comes 'the day,' the awful day,
Big with the fate of duns and pay.

II.

" 'Tis sweet to hear his voice's music sound,
Demand if ' Shahib ghur me hy !'
'Tis sweet to see him, with salam profound,
Enter the room; but sometimes a sigh
Will 'scape you, that the servant did not say,
' Master's not at home to day.'

III.

" But sweeter still than this, than all,
Is the exquisite sensation,
When, having come within the hall,
You see him, without hesitation,
Forth withdraw from out his pocket-book
The bill long due, on which you dare not look.

IV.

" Presenting it to your unwilling hand,
Saying, ' Master, here's one bill
Long due by you; but you must understand
Wait for payment I no longer will.
Pay me now, or else I shall be fain
To go to Captain Whistler's* to complain.

* The head of the police at Secunderâbad; sporting mention has already been made of him in these pages.

V.

" Upon my word, I am extremely sorry
That I've not paid it long ago.
But why and wherefore all this hurry?
Why not a little patience shew?
You must, in fact; at least, I pray
That you'll wait till next pay day.

VI.

" Same *ting* always Master say,
The money when I want to get.
Must come next month; or ' Pisā nay;'
Or that you the bill forget.
Two or three days or weeks to wait,
Or when I come, I come too late."*

* These lines were composed by my talented friend, alas! no more, poor George de Blaquiere, of the 8th Regiment, N. I., of which he was at the time adjutant. He succeeded shortly after to his company, and during some troubles which occurred to the north of Vizagapatam, was put in charge of a hill fort. He here contracted jungle fever, and died on his post, which he was resolved not to quit, though by so doing he might, in all probability; have saved his life. By his death the service lost a capital officer, and a young man of the most brilliant talents.

The Parsees are the descendants of the ancient followers of Zoroaster, the fire-worshipping Persians of the time of Cyrus; and if it be true that by

> "*Tre*, *vor*, and *Pen*,
> You may know the Cornish men,"

it is no less so that

> "By the termination *jee*,
> You may know the Parsee,"

and the appellations of Bomanjee, Houssenjee, and Dousetjee, speak at once for themselves. They are altogether a strange people, preserving many of the old customs of their forefathers, which they have brought with them to the land of their adoption, after having been expelled from Persia by the Mahomedans. They still worship the orb of day, and in fire reverence its symbol; they continue, as in days of yore, to expose their dead on the tops of high towers, where they are al-

lowed to remain until devoured by the birds of the air. They are in general an industrious, hard-working set, and many have attained, particularly at Bombay, to considerable eminence, and acquired immense riches; generally, at the latter place, as merchants or shipbuilders.

Another great resource at all times, but particularly during the rainy season, and which always killed one day in the week, was the public breakfasts every Monday morning at the Residency; it was a sort of levee held by the Resident, at which every one desirous of paying his respects to him used to attend.

On these occasions, vehicles of every description were put into requisition, from the four-in-hand break, and dashing tandem, to the "Nibbs" dog-cart and humble "bandy." For my part, I had a *drag* quite original of its kind, the idea of which I had borrowed from the "Black Joke,"

which we navigated on the Perkhal Lake. This consisted of a wicker-work case covered with waterproof leather, and surmounted by a canvass awning, which, placed on wheels, and put behind a fast trotting hack, made a very *varmint*, not to say respectable turn out; and by merely backing it into the water, setting it afloat, unshipping the top, which was converted into a sail, and the bamboos which supported it into oars, made a capital boat, able to carry two, and well adapted for duck shooting on the numerous large tanks which abounded in the neighbourhood of the cantonment.

On this "unique" conveyance I used often to rattle over to the "Burrā Sahib's hazree," where during Mr. Martin's time we always met a kind reception, and after the magnificent dejeuner, used to wile away the day with all manner of fun, at Byam's quarters, in beating up Dr. V——,

or in visiting the C——'s or M——'s, two remarkably pleasant families attached to the Residency.

On Mr. Martin's departure, the same hospitality was exercised by his successor, Major Stewart, with the additional attractions always imparted by female society, for Mrs. S——, or, as she was commonly called, the "Queen," was a delightful woman; her daughter quite a Dudu in manners and appearance,

"Not very lively, but extremely winning,"

a nice unaffected person, and had generally stopping with her Miss K——, who to the charms of a very pretty person added those of a well-stored mind; so that, with all these inducements, it is not to be wondered at if the "boat" very frequently navigated the road leading to Chudderghaut, as the site of the Residency was termed by the natives.

Then, as soon as the rains abated somewhat of their violence, towards the month of October, between the intervals of preparing for the inspections, "the Sporting Club" at least once a week held its reunions. We took it turn and turn to send out a tent to some favourite shooting spot, which was left to the choice of the man providing habitation and grub for the time being, everyone carrying his own liquor. Here we would receive our sporting and non-sporting acquaintances, finding abundance of sport for the former, and making plenty *of* the latter. Amongst this class we often used to inveigle out Joe D——, and played him all manner of tricks, which he invariably bore with good humour.

On one occasion, being encamped at Burrasapett, some miles from the cantonment, Joe rode out in the morning to spend the day with us. He arrived very

hungry after his long ride, and the smile on his grim countenance betokened the greatest inward satisfaction as we sat down at breakfast to a well-garnished table. The numerous covered dishes betokened a sumptuous feast. Joe's eyes glistened, particularly the larboard one, as, rubbing his hands, he exclaimed, "Indeed I'm very glad I came out; a ride in the morning gives one such an appetite. Yes, indeed!"

"Come, Joe," cried one of the party, "let's see what you've got before you, and stop your jaw with a little grub."

Joe drew towards him the dish, lifted the cover, when out leapt on his plate a huge bull-frog of the size of a lobster. He started up not a little alarmed, amidst shouts of laughter, which he, however, joined at last in himself. He called for another plate, heaped it well with rice, uncovered a second dish, which he con-

cluded held the curry, when, to his now unqualified horror, and amidst our screeches of delight, forth into the very centre of the snowy pile before him crawled the hideous form of a large green eye-snake.*

Joe could stand this no longer; he dashed snake, rice, and plate on the ground, rushed out of the tent, and we saw no more of him till tiffin, which, as our cotton house had been packed up to send home, was spread under the shade of a thick mangoe tree.

The loss of breakfast had nowise impaired Joe's appetite; and although he

* Sometimes known as the *tree-snake*. So called from the propensity it is said to possess of darting from the branch of a tree, where it usually lies coiled up, and fastening on the eye of the passer by. It is of a bright green colour, generally between three or four feet in length, and said to be venemous, though on one occasion I was bitten by one without feeling any bad effects, having, however, taken the precaution to suck the wound.

displayed great caution in removing the covers of the several dishes, this operation once effected, he did wonderful execution amongst them; and after eating enough for half-a-dozen, was, in the anticipation of an hour's uninterrupted repose ere we mounted our horses, stretched luxuriously on the green sward, leaning against the trunk of the tree, with his cheroot in his cheek and glass of grog by his side.

In this attitude Joe was the very personification of comfort and content; but, alas! how transitory is all happiness in this world of woe! and how often does the sword of misfortune hang unawares over our devoted heads! and Joe little imagined that it was *then* suspended over *his* head by a mere horse-hair. He fancied, poor fellow! that as a guest we had given him the place of honour, the most comfortable at our sylvan board. Little did he suspect that a young imp of the name

of B——, who was always the promoter of mischief in the club, had secretly concealed amidst the leafy branches overhead an enormous chatty* full of water, which was craftily suspended by a rope; and as nearly as possible under this the unfortunate victim of persecution had been seated.

On a preconcerted signal, and whilst he was in the very acme of his quiet enjoyment, the rope was severed, down came the chatty, which, fortunately for him, fell a little on one side, but deluged him with water, whilst the unhappy wight was further astounded by the demon-like yells which were set up around him. He, however, was seriously displeased; but as he could not fix on any particular one of the party, he merely expressed his fixed determination not to honour us any more

* A large earthen pitcher, used for carrying water.

with his company, and retired to wring his dripping garments.

But B—— was not satisfied: the young demon of mischief vowed he had got off *too cheap*, as the chatty had not fallen *on* him; and said he *must* have another rise out of him, as it might be the last we would ever get, since he had expressed his determination to cut the Sporting Club.

As it was getting late, we soon mounted our horses; Joe was on a wild and nearly unbroken three-year-old colt. It was now dark; but on entering a narrow part of the road I observed B—— to ride quietly up behind the colt, and hit him two or three sharp cuts with the whip. The next moment both colt and Joe disappeared in the increasing darkness, whilst young "Puck," nearly falling off his horse from convulsions of laughter, exclaimed, "I told you I'd serve the old fellow out!

There he goes, and the devil catch him!"

The young ruffian had before we mounted unbuckled his reins, and now, like a second Mazeppa, on the wings of speed, and under the mantle of darkness, was poor Joe, on his wild steed, scouring across country at a fearful pace.

God knows how he was stopped in his headlong career; we never dared to question him on the subject: it was the last time he trusted himself to the tender mercies of the "Sporting Club."

CHAPTER VI.

THE WHIRLWIND — TRAVELLING IN A PALANKEEN — THE LAST SHOT — CELEBRATED TIGER SLAYERS — A PERILOUS SITUATION — RUNJEET SING'S OFFICER — MADRAS HAWKERS — SNAKES AND SNAKE CATCHERS.

> "The Psylli were an Afric clan,
> Of wond'rous power possest;
> Fierce snakes, of enmity to man
> They could with ease divest."
>
> HAYLEY.

THE month of March had set in with its fiery concomitants in the Deccan, the burning land-winds and a scorching sun; clouds of dust were impetuously swept along the level roads of the cantonment of Secunderabad, which ever and anon appearing to be suddenly checked in their

headlong course by some mysterious and invisible power, would concentrate their fury on some devoted spot, and revolving with astonishing rapidity on their own centres, formed the most appalling " *Pishashes,*" or whirlwinds, which, sucking up within their vortices all lighter substances, carried them upwards to a great height, and then dispersed them to the winds of heaven. Woe to the unfortunate traveller who allowed himself to be surprised by one of these children, as their name implies, of the Prince of the Air, the offspring of the desert, and produce of the torrid zone.

The unhappy wight, after having his clothes nearly torn off his back, scorched by the burning blast, blinded and choked by the heated particles of sand and dust, which dries up every drop of moisture on his shrivelled skin, would, on the sudden dispersion of the enemy, be glad to effect

his escape in a state bordering on suffocation.

Under these circumstances, it is not to be wondered at if the "highways" of the cantonment were, on the occasion alluded to, completely deserted, and the sun shed his fiery glances, and the hot winds breathed their furnace breath, on nought save the heated roofs of the bungalows, or the (even at this red-hot season) green rows of the milk hedges, surrounding them, and bordering the white line of road, which was dimly seen through the dancing mirage, caused by the excessive glare and intolerable heat. The place might have been taken for the "city of the dead;" and save where the fierce-looking little "blood-sucker" protruded his crimsoned and swelling neck along the branch of some thorny bhur, or the smooth bark of the mindee tree, no living creature was to be seen abroad.

The hour was about three in the afternoon, when to a palankeen, placed at the door of my bungalow, the numerous bearers were busily employed in conveying sundry small parcels, which betokened the preparations for a long voyage; and when, supported by a servant, I slowly approached and stowed myself into the vehicle, a spectator might have guessed the destination of the traveller to have been beyond the limits of *this* world. In short, I was regularly done up—floored, horse, foot, and dragoons. Snipe shooting, imprudence, and exposure, had done their work, and I was bidding adieu, perhaps for ever, to the friends of my youth, and to scenes where so many days had been joyously passed. Still I had had my fun; I regretted not the past, and consoled myself with the idea that we cannot *have*, and at the same time *eat*, our cake.

I *had* eaten it, with all its sweets, had lived every day of my life; and though my summer appeared "passed in May," I was determined not to cry "die," but keeping up my pluck, see what might be effected by an attempt to reach Europe, and breathe once more my native air.

I was soon snugly established in my new abode, and, in the well stored palankeen, uplifted on the shoulders of six stout bearers, who kept step to the slow monotonous tune to which they pitch their voices, and invariably drone forth when carrying their burthen, was soon carried clear of the good cantonment of Secunderabad, though not of the numerous recollections associated with it.

Nothing can exceed the comfort of travelling in a palankeen, particularly to an invalid, and by easy stages, as I went to Madras on this occasion. You recline luxuriously on soft cushions, with your

books, writing apparatus, and every requisite at hand, and even my trusty old double-barrel was still here my constant companion, extended at length by my side.

The palankeen is at once house, bed, and carriage, whilst you are borne rapidly over the ground with so imperceptible a motion, as not to interrupt even the lightest slumbers.

I generally travelled at the rate of 15 or 20 miles a-day, and chose the season of night for the period of my migrations. I used, shortly after dark, to undress, go regularly to bed, give the head bearer the name of the place I intended to halt at on the succeeding day; I was carried thither during the night, and on awaking next morning found myself, without exertion, at my destination, and a comfortable breakfast spread out on the camp table, either under the shady boughs of a thick tamarind tree, the recesses of a serai, or

the airy rooms of one of the neat little travellers' bungalows which from stage to stage line the Madras road as soon as, passing the Kishnah, you enter the Company's territories. Whilst in the Nizam's dominions, the traveller who is unprovided with a tent is obliged to have recourse to one of the former expedients for obtaining shelter. There are several serais* between Hyderabad and the *river*, as the Kishnah is called *par excellence*; but at

* These houses of public entertainment, or rather shelter, are common over the whole East, and where Mahomedanism exists, are to be found for the reception of travellers. In India they consist of an oblong enclosure, entered by a gateway, in which generally resides some poor person, who for the gratuity he occasionally receives, sweeps out the cells which are found in the thickness of the wall of the enclosure. Opposite the gate is a small mosque, with its graceful minarets, where the pious Mussulman may spread the carpet of devotion, and perform one of the numerous orisons daily required by the rites of his religion. On their death-bed it is a

this season of the year the shade of a mangoe or tamarind tope is far preferable, both on account of the superior coolness as well as cleanliness there enjoyed.

After crossing the Moussah at Oopul, we skirted the precincts of the Rumnah, or antelope preserve of the Nizam, and I here unexpectedly fell in with a party of sportsmen of my acquaintance, who were eagerly pursuing that amusement to which I had myself been so devoted, and which

common thing for the rich old sinner to bequeath large sums of money for the erection of these useful edifices, in the same way as the dying Hindoo, in hopes of being recompensed by a swim in the sea of melted butter, or *ghee*, renders a benefit to the living by causing the large reservoirs of water to be dug, which are so frequently met with, and prove such a blessing in this burning clime. Meer Alum, the predecessor of the (then) present minister, Mounier-ul-Mulk, is said to have been the person by means of whose bequests the serais on the road between Hyderabad and the Kishnah were erected.

was the main cause of my being *then* shut up, like an old bed-ridden woman, in a box, instead of enjoying the free use of my limbs, and roving uncontrolled, as in happier times, over the wide meidan.*

This rencontre aroused the most bitter feelings and reflections at my then crippled and helpless state; however, with a hearty shake of the hand from the boon companions of many a past jovial hour, and with the best wishes on their part for my speedy recovery, we parted; *they*, to enjoy the exciting pleasures of the chase, *I* to pursue my cheerless and solitary road. Never at any period of my life did I feel myself more completely "*flambé*," to use an expressive French term. Never had my usually buoyant spirits been so completely prostrated as at that moment, when, leaning back in what now assumed all the gloomy appearance of my coffin, I

* The plain, the open country.

gave myself up to the darkest forebodings.

I was, however, aroused from this brown study by the palkee being suddenly put on the ground, and looking out to see what was the cause of this unexpected halt, one of the bearers eagerly exclaimed, "Dekho, Sahib! bhot hurunan hy!" "See, Sir, how many antelopes!" I was out in a minute, the old double-barrel was, by the force of instinct, at my shoulder, and a fine black buck, bounding across the road about seventy yards in front, was the next second, after one convulsive spring, stopped in mid career, and lay quivering in the dust.

A chance shot may hit the devil, and it was the last time I ever drew trigger on an antelope. The bearers were delighted; it was to them a good supper, a more substantial one than their accustomed meal of rice. I freely bequeathed it to them, on

condition that they would preserve the horns for me, and leaving two of their number to bring in the slain, the rest *chulled* cherrily along at a brisker pace, and to a more lively tune than heretofore, until they safely deposited me at the little and well-known village of Umrapett, where my baggage, servants, and a small bichovah,* were awaiting my arrival.

For endurance and capability of supporting fatigue, the Indian palankeen bearers are equalled by few and surpassed by no race of men. Under a burning sun, in the hottest weather, they can, on a pinch, make a run, without halting, of twenty-five or thirty miles, carrying on their shoulders the heavy weight of the palanquin and that of the often bulky person it contains. For short distances, and when in quarters, six or seven is the

* A small tent carried on one bullock, and usually sent on to have breakfast provided in during a march.

usual number of a set of "buyan," or "boys," as they are commonly called by Europeans; one of these is the directing man, and generally a trust-worthy servant; the others often make themselves useful in families, (for a set of bearers was not the usual appendage to a bachelor's establishment,) by looking after the children, or any little jobs, whilst their leisure hours are passed either in making their fishing-nets, in playing at cards, or more frequently in the enjoyment of "black man's fun," vulgarly known by the name of "sleep."

On short trips, unless carrying very much ballast, four "boys" at a time are generally sufficient for the palkee; these are occasionally relieved by the spare ones, who then very dexterously slip under the shaft and take the weight off their comrade's shoulders. On a march, the set is increased to thirteen and a

torch-bearer, whilst six at a time carry the burden of the now heavily-laden machine, which, besides its occupant, is obliged to be loaded with sundry other articles of necessity or comfort.

By having bearers posted at stated distances, which is called travelling "dawk," long journeys are made in a comparatively brief space of time; on an average, including stoppages, about four miles per hour may be reckoned as the usual rate of going "dawk," or about one hundred miles in the twenty-four hours, at which rate a person generally takes, posting in this manner, about four days to run from Hyderabad to Madras; but to one in a weak state of health, the fatigue of such an undertaking would be too great; however, journeys of upwards of a thousand miles are frequently performed in this manner.

About five days brought us to the large

Mahometan village of Nelcondah, the most considerable place on this line of march, after Ongole and Nellore. This was the scene of the daring exploit of Captain Whistler, as described before; and now the traveller could pass in safety and unmolested between those hills which heretofore were never approached without fear and trembling. From the sentiment of more than gratitude which I have always observed to exist, particularly in the remoter districts, towards any European who may have rid their simple inhabitants of the scourge of a ferocious wild beast, the reflection has often arisen in my mind that the ancient heroes of old, such as Jason, Hercules, and Theseus, must have earned their immortality and laurels at a very cheap rate; so prone are we all to reward immediate benefits much more highly than others which, though of infinitely greater importance,

may not be felt at the very moment on which they are conferred.

To this day, the names of Whistler, of Johnson, and of *Tiger* Davies,* are as well known and as much revered in the Deccan as those of the above-mentioned worthies were in the more classic land of Greece, where, principally by the destruction of wild beasts, then abounding in its primeval forests, they based their renown on such broad and solid foundations. But though they may each and severally have destroyed wild boars and wild bulls,

* Of the latter it is related, that armed with a brace of pistols, he on one occasion crept into a tiger's den, which ran to a considerable distance under a ledge of rocks. The aperture was so small that he was obliged to crawl along on his belly; he had taken the precaution to have a rope fastened round his body, by which, on a given signal, he was to be drawn out backwards by those stationed at the entrance of the den. The attendant to whom he had made the preconcerted signal, drew him out before the time, and with such violence, that his

serpents and dragons, history makes no mention of their ever having bearded the "royal tiger" in his den, and sent a rifle-bullet through his heart in the very citadel of his stronghold.

Danger (though not fear) is never so completely felt as when under its immediate influence; nor is its absence ever so much appreciated as when on the very spot where, having *once* felt that influence, you may now repose in safety. This was very strongly impressed on my mind as, during the cool of the evening, I slowly

clothes were not only torn off, but his body severely lacerated. Davies was not, however, to be thus balked; he crept in again, approached the crouching monster, and, guided by the lustre of his eyes, fired a pistol close to his head, and extended him dead on the spot. This gallant fellow was, a short time afterwards, shot by a trooper of his Rissalah; he having imprudently ordered, by way of punishment, that his men, who were all Mussulmans, should cut off their beards, which so exasperated them as to give rise to the above tragical occurrence.

strolled from my tent towards the hill, which had once been the abode of the far-famed "man-eater." The last time I had gone over this identical ground, some six or seven years before, was under the influence of very different feelings. I was marching up the country with a large detachment of recruits, who, like myself, all in their griffinage, had but lately landed at Madras. In the evening, S——, the assistant surgeon doing duty with the detachment, and myself, not aware of having anything to apprehend, resolved to explore the old tower, which, perched, like an eagle's nest, on the very summit of the hill, was a conspicuous object from our tents.

Unaware of the difficulty generally attendant on reaching one of these hill-forts, we were long in toiling up the steep and painful ascent, broken by ledges of rock, and covered with low and thorny

jungle shrubs. The sun was just setting in all its splendour as we reached our goal, and after wasting the short twilight* of a tropical evening in exploring the ruins, we were nearly enveloped in darkness ere we thought of retracing our steps.

At this moment, a distant though fearful noise was heard: we had neither of us ever before listened to the voice of the "lord of the wilderness" whilst freely roving in his own domains. But instinct

* Every one is aware of the little twilight of a tropical evening, when darkness immediately follows the glare of day. The reader may perhaps not be equally well acquainted with a circumstance attending the rising of the orb of day: about an hour before this takes place, a faint streak of light is visible in the East, which is called the "false dawn;" this is again succeeded by darkness ere the "true dawn" precedes the rising of the glorious sun. This has given rise to many pretty conceits, expressed in all the flowery language of the East, in some of the Hindee and Persian poems.

at once told us that this appalling sound could proceed from nothing but the "royal tiger." A second and a nearer peal reverberated through the ruined walls. Here was a pretty predicament for two raw "griffins" to be placed in! Without a single weapon, or had we possessed such a thing, lacking the experience to use it, darkness and uncertainty before us, and a deadly and dreadful foe momentarily drawing nearer, were circumstances in themselves sufficient to have appalled older stagers than ourselves; and, to be candid, I for one felt in a most confounded funk.

However, no time was to be lost; we remembered the old adage of—"He who fights, and runs away," and dispensing with the first part of the ceremony, we started down the hill as if old Nick had been behind us. In those days, I was active as a deer; and, with the exception

of one or two falls, owing to the increasing darkness, I managed to bound from one ledge of rock to the other, in our downward descent, with a velocity which is only to be acquired under similar circumstances. My companion kept pace with me, but his progress was on a different principle;—he was built on the model of Falstaff, and his spherical shape, meeting with little atmospherical resistance—which was, besides, partly overcome by the oily nature of the substance opposed to it—shot down the side of the hill with wonderful swiftness.

At the very first spring he made, I observed he had lost his footing, and feared it would be *all up* with him, being in too great a hurry myself to offer him any assistance. I was, however, mistaken; for although he did not alight on his legs, he nevertheless continued his course, acquiring a fresh impetus by every suc-

ceeding bound. It now became a race between specific gravity and lightness, between weight and activity, between the flight of an arrow and that of a sixty-four pounder. The latter in the long run must have carried the day; however, as we neared the bottom of the hill, we were cheered by the appearance of numerous torches, which, together with the loud shouts which proceeded from their direction, proclaimed assistance to be at hand, and in a short time we found ourselves surrounded by friends and out of danger, through the provident care of our commanding officer, Major C—— who, on hearing of our protracted absence, had sent a large party of the camp followers with lights in search of us.

My poor friend was too much done up, bruised, and lacerated, after his comet-like course, to be able to get a second time "under-weigh;" we, however, soon pro-

vided a dooly* for his conveyance, in which he was safely carried to his tent, and deposited on his camp-bed. Poor S——! never shall I forget the object he then appeared, nor his excessive wrath at my inhuman and unreasonable mirth on the occasion, when, after recovering breath, I laughed at his unhappy plight till the tears trickled down my cheeks; and verily it would have made even a stoic split his sides. The corpulent little

* The dooly is a palankeen of a coarse construction, being a frame-work covered with painted, water-proof canvass; to every detachment of troops a certain number of these are attached to transport the *sick*. An anecdote is related of a Member of Parliament, who appears not to have made himself perfectly acquainted beforehand with the subject of his oration, and whilst expatiating on the hardships endured by the troops in India, stated, "that after an engagement, the '*ferocious* doolies' rushed down from the hills and carried away the sick and wounded. The patriotic statesman had little idea of the nature of the beast he was alluding to!

fellow had during his rapid descent been, by rocks and brambles, divested of nearly every garment—he was entirely so of the nether ones,—whilst his scratched and bleeding phiz, still more distorted with rage, presented altogether a scene which was quite "impayable."

A few days more carried me to the boundary of the Nizam's territories, the river Kishnah. I had a capital set of bearers, and got on without any "baubery."* An occasional present of a sheep, which was always to be had for the moderate sum of one rupee, (about 2*s*. 4*d*.) enabled them to have a feast, which for days furnished them with strength and good-will. It is astonishing what work these people go through, more especially when the poorness of their diet is taken into consideration. On arriving at the

* Anglice, "trouble," disturbance of any kind.

halting-ground, the first thing the palankeen-bearer does is to perform his ablutions at a neighbouring tank, or "bowrie;" he there washes his clothes; some are afterwards employed in cooking rice, whilst others, with nets of their own manufacture, drag the tank for fish; if successful, they serve to season the dish of boiled rice, which, except when the present of a sheep enables them to vary their meal, always constitutes the simple repast of these hard-working, honest fellows.

As we approached the Kishnah, the ground became so rocky that within a few miles of its banks it was nearly impassable; however, my trusty bearers got me in safety over these "dry and stony places," and I was not sorry on finding myself deposited, with *my box*, in one of the large wicker-work baskets, which, covered with bullocks' hides, are em-

ployed to ferry people across this (during the rains) deep and rapid stream. At the time we crossed, the river was fordable; but from the extremely rocky nature of its bed, a false step of one of the bearers was to be apprehended, and would have sent me, *box* and baggage, into the stream, where, besides the chance of drowning in a ready-made coffin—should I even have succeeded in extricating myself from it—there were such things as alligators to pick up a stray passenger.

Of this we had a proof at the time we crossed over. A party of natives, wishing to evade the expense of the ferry, resolved on fording, when, during their progress across, a small Brahminee bullock, which constituted one of the caravan, was suddenly dragged under water and carried off by an enormous alligator.

On reaching the southern bank, I entered the Company's territories, and

was not sorry at being deposited in the nice clean chunam-floored verandah of the travellers' bungalow.

I found it already occupied; but as there was abundant room and accommodation for two, and my new acquaintance seemed an agreeable fellow, I believe that neither of us regretted falling in with a white face after being so long amongst the "niggers."

Colonel Mœvius was a German by birth, but spoke fluently both the English and French languages. He had been engaged in Runject Sing's military service for upwards of ten years; during the above period, he had amassed a considerable fortune, with which he intended to return to his "father-land," and, till he left the East for good, was making a tour through the Indian Archipelago, when he suddenly learnt the prostration of all his schemes and air-built castles, by the

failure of the house at Calcutta, in which the whole of his property was invested. Reduced thus to the necessity of beginning the world afresh, he applied to be reinstated in his old appointment. Runjeet was too glad to avail himself once more of his military talents; and, via Hyderabad and Bombay, he was now proceeding to Lahore to resume the command of his brigade.

He was a particularly agreeable fellow. I spent a pleasant day with him, during which he gave me much information as to the state of Runjeet Sing's territories. Amongst other things, I remember him to have mentioned the manner in which he was paid by the Maharajah; which was, by having a certain district allotted to him, from which he was to make the most he could. "But," said I, "don't you find this rather an uncertain source of revenue, and have not you some difficulty in collecting your rents?"

He replied, that nothing of the kind ever occurred; for that, whenever a Zemindar proved refractory, and objected to disgorge the required amount, it was always forthcoming by having recourse to "de tumb-schrew" system; which I found out to be neither more nor less than torturing the poor devil by the application of the instruments anciently known by the name of "angels."

His pecuniary loss had neither destroyed the Colonel's appetite or joviality. During dinner, besides several sundries, he demolished a whole hare, of his own shooting; a bottle of port and a half ditto of sherry, with which I supplied him, speedily disappeared, besides making a considerable hole, over his cheroot, in a bottle of Cognac brandy. Before I turned in for the night we had become great allies; I gave him a letter to the officer commanding at Secunderabad, lent him my tent, which I had now no further

occasion for; and he testified his gratitude and friendly feeling by an iron grasp which brought the tears into my eyes.

On crossing the Kishnah, and approaching the Coromandel coast, it is astonishing what a change of climate is immediately experienced. This is caused by the more elevated situation of the table land composing the Deccan, but principally owing to the ranges of hills, which cause such a difference in the effect of the monsoons. To the north of the Kishnah the rainy season begins about June, and lasts till the middle of October; after which, fine, dry, cold, and bracing weather sets in till the end of February. It now commences to be rather hot, but the *grilling* does not regularly begin for a month later. At Hyderabad we had during the year three months of *very* hot weather, three months of *very* wet ditto, and the remainder, particularly December and January, was cool and pleasant.

Behold, now, the difference on the Coromandel coast: here, in consequence of the south-west monsoon not being felt, the broiling weather continues till the middle of October, when, as a signal of the approaching north-east monsoon, and a warning for vessels to keep off the coast, the flag-staff at Madras is struck; shortly after this the rain comes down in torrents, and lasts till the beginning of January, which is bonâ fide the only cool month in this part of India.

After passing the considerable towns of Ongole and Nellore, about one month's marching, or rather *palankeening*, brought me to Madras; passing through which, I took up my abode at the pretty village of Milapore,* on the coast, about three miles to the south of Fort St. George.

I was well aware of the innumerable

* Known better as St. Thomé, and where many of the Madras civilians have delightful country seats.

delays and difficulties an officer going home on sick certificate experiences ere he is able to leave the Presidency, and knew that, ere I could possibly embark, at least a month must elapse to follow all the ridiculous forms observed on these occasions;* and during this time, conceiving I should be much better employed inhaling the sea breezes at St. Thomé than stewed within the walls of the fort, I had written to engage a small bungalow at the former place, to which I immediately proceeded.

* Were government at home aware of all the vexatious delays to which the often dying invalid is exposed, and the numerous difficulties thrown in the way of his speedy embarkation, they would, I am convinced, make some reform, at least in the case of queen's officers. The number of public offices at which the poor exhausted wretch is obliged to attend in person, during the hottest hours of the day, would be, even to a person in perfect health, extremely distressing, and subjects John Company

During my residence here, I used, during the cooler hours of even and morn, to wander solitarily along the beach, and gaze on the "world of waters," so many years a stranger to my sight; or in the thickly-planted cocoa-nut groves, to saunter about under the shade of their large wavering and feathery foliage, bidding a silent adieu to the *tropical* associations they conveyed.

During the sultry time of noon, my solitude was frequently enlivened by the loquacious "hawker," who came to offer

to the imputation of endeavouring to get rid of the men who have lost their health, and maybe destroyed their constitution, whilst serving them, to save the expense of their passage-money. I take this opportunity of returning my best thanks to Mr. Cator, of the Civil Service, for all the attention I experienced at his hands whilst at St. Thomé; and to Lieutenant Leonard Smith, of H.M. 57th, for the trouble he took in getting me through the ordeals I had to pass ere I could "cross the surf."

his numerous wares for sale, and who, as the cooly, who was the bearer of the large box containing his precious relics, squatted down pensively and in silence near his burthen, would for an hour at a time exhaust his eloquence in descanting on the merits of his various wares.*

But my principal pastime was derived from the visits of a remarkable set of people, and of whom I have not yet made mention in these pages—I allude to the "samp-wallahs," or snake-catchers, who, whether by trickery or not, certainly perform the most wonderful feats with these

* The Madras hawkers are proverbially rascals: they generally buy inferior articles at sales, or, as they are called, "outerys;" these they retail at immense profit, and spare no trouble in laying out for display their goods and chattels, which they always extol to the skies. "Look, Sar, plenty fine ting got; Punjum cloth—Isseree cloth—Nalkeen! Very cheap; give 'em master favour for!" is the common address of one of these gentry.

dangerous reptiles, who, ever since the temptation of mother Eve, appear to have inherited the universal horror and detestation of mankind.

Although, comparatively speaking, few of the tribe are endowed with that subtle venom which causes certain, nay, almost instantaneous death, the very possibility of the existence of the poison, and the uncertainty of which do and which do not possess this dreadful means of defence, have rendered the whole race obnoxious to man.

They may be divided into three separate classes — first, those which, from their superior size and power, are dangerous when instigated by the cravings of hunger, and which they satisfy with everything breathing the breath of life. At the head of this class may be placed the boa constrictor, which has occasionally attained such a stupendous size

as to be able, it is *said*, to destroy, and afterwards swallow, a buffalo;* and instances are on record of a boa having swallowed the body of a stag, whose antlers, from the inability of the gullet to receive them, continued for a length of time to protrude out of the animal's mouth.

This may, perhaps, be a *stretcher;* but, however, it is certain that the jaws of all

* Buffon, vol. xv. p. 73, has the following:—"In a letter printed in the German Ephemerides we have an account of a combat between an enormous serpent and a buffalo, by a person who assures us that he was himself a spectator. The serpent had for some time been waiting near the bank of a pool in expectation of its prey, when a buffalo was the first that offered. Having darted upon the affrighted animal, it instantly began to wrap it round with its voluminous twistings; and at every twist the bones of the buffalo were heard to crack almost as loud as the report of a cannon. It was in vain that the poor animal struggled and bellowed, its enormous enemy was entwined round it too closely to get free; till at length, all its bones being

serpents are liable to a great extension, so much so as to enable them to swallow a body much thicker than their own, and which arises from their peculiar conformation. They do not open, like those of other animals, on the principle of hinges, but are held together at the roots by an elastic muscular skin, which enables the reptile to stretch them to nearly any extent.

mashed to pieces, like those of a malefactor at the wheel, and the whole body reduced to one uniform mass, the serpent untwined its folds to swallow its prey at leisure. To prepare for this, and in order to make the body slip down the throat more glibly, it was seen to lick the whole body over, and thus cover it with its mucus. It then began to swallow it at that end that offered least resistance, while its length of body was dilated to receive its prey, and thus took in at once a morsel that was three times its own thickness. We are also assured by travellers that these animals are often found with the body of a stag in their gullet, while the horns, which they are unable to swallow, keep sticking out of their mouths."

In the good old times when Hercules was such a keen sportsman, these animals attained such a size as to be able to devastate whole provinces. However, even the seven-headed Hydra of Lerna proved no match for the hero, who, as an infant in the cradle, had strangled the two large serpents sent by the implacable Juno for his destruction. More recently we read in Pliny of an enormous serpent disputing the passage of a river in the deserts of Africa against the Roman legions under Regulus, who only ensured its destruction, after losing many soldiers, by bringing against it the battering engines which followed the army. The skin of this monster, which Pliny avers to have himself seen, and which measured one hundred and twenty feet, was sent to Rome, and the General was decreed an *ovation* for his success.

No doubt but that the accounts given

by the ancients were greatly exaggerated; still it is probable that snakes were in their time found of a size far exceeding those of the present day, owing to the then almost uninhabited state of the countries which they frequented; and this conclusion is the more feasible from the great size which even in our times they often attain in some parts of Asia and Africa.

Under the second class may be ranked the snakes which, with less physical powers than the former, possess the dreadful protection of their venom; we say *protection*, because against man it is never used except in self-defence. At the approach of the lords of the creation, the first impulse of this tribe is instantaneous flight or concealment. Should they be thwarted in this, they have immediate recourse to those means which nature has implanted in them, and but too frequently

with fatal effects. Foremost in this class stand the rattle-snake and cobra-capello, or hooded serpent; the former peculiar to America, the latter confined, I believe, to Asia. Against the bite of either I know of no certain remedy, except instant amputation of the whole wounded part. Some recommend eau de Luce; others say that olive oil, when rubbed into the part, held over burning coals or charcoal, and also taken internally, is an efficacious cure; and I believe that in the bite of the viper there is no doubt of its being so. The continued use for forty days of the leaves of the Aristolochia semper-virens were formerly recommended to those who wished to protect themselves against the bite of these animals.

The poison, though so deadly when infused into the blood, is said, when taken internally, to be perfectly innocuous; and I have somewhere read of its having at

one time been a common practice in Egypt to eat both serpents and scorpions.

The last, and by far the most numerous, of this tribe are those which, from their smallness and want of venom, are perfectly harmless, though they seldom enjoy the benefit of their innocence, being generally confounded in the list for condemnation with their more dangerous brethren, in whose guilt they are supposed to participate.

As mankind became more civilized and spread wider over the face of the earth, the larger monsters which formerly infested its deserts and impervious forests began to disappear; and in the destruction of the lesser obnoxious animals, craft and subtlety supplied the place of brute force. It was then that the profession of the "snake-charmer" had its rise, which, however, is undoubtedly of great antiquity.

It is often mentioned in scripture; in the fifty-eighth Psalm we hear of "the deaf *adder* that stoppeth her ear, which will not listen to the voice of *charmers*, charming never so wisely." Again, in Ecclesiastes, chap. x.—"Surely the serpent will bite without *enchantment*," &c. The charmer, however, was not always free from injury; for once more, in Ecclesiastes, we find—"Who will pity a charmer that is bitten by a serpent?"

In profane history mention is made of an ancient African race called the Psylli, who were famed for their power over the most deadly of these animals; and snake-charmers are to this day common in Egypt. We read in Dr. Hume's Journal the following account of these people:—"There is a tribe of civilized Arabs in Egypt who pretend that they are respected by serpents, and that no sort of snake can hurt them. As a proof of this, there is an

annual procession of the tribe through the streets of Rosetta, of which I was a witness: one of their number is obliged to eat a living snake in public, or so much of it as to occasion its death. Probably the snake may have been rendered harmless by some means; the people, however, suppose that for some act of piety performed by the ancestors of this tribe or family (which is by no means numerous) the prophet protects the descendants from any injury the snakes might occasion. The ophiophagus, who is to keep up this ridiculous farce, being no doubt well paid, begins to eat the living reptile; a pretty large snake is held in his hands, which writhes its folds round his naked arm as he bites at the head and body. Horror and fury are depicted on the man's countenance, and in a strong convulsive manner he puts the animal to death by eating and swallowing part of it alive. This

disgusting and horrible spectacle, however, is but seldom exhibited at present.

"In the house in which I lived at Alexandria there was a room containing a large quantity of rubbish and lumber, which had not been removed for some years; a small snake was one day discovered in it, on which account I resolved to have the room examined, and the supposed nest of snakes destroyed. My interpreter persuaded me to send for one of the family already mentioned. The snake-charmer was an old man, by trade a carpenter: he prayed fervently at the door for a quarter of an hour, and at length, pale and trembling, ventured into the room, while an English sailor, who was at that time my servant, proceeded to clear away the rubbish with perfect unconcern. Two small snakes were found, and these were killed by the shovel of my servant. There are many kinds of snakes and reptiles

about the ruins in the neighbourhood of Alexandria; among them some have fancied they have discovered the asp. I have seen here the black scorpion, whose sting is reputed mortal; but this is a vulgar prejudice.

"A mixture of meal, wine, and honey was the food given, as we are informed by Ælian, (N.A., lib. xxvii.,) to a species of serpent by the ancient Egyptians. The snake is esteemed sacred by the present Arab inhabitants of Egypt; and I have been told that they frequently place milk and roots for their subsistence when it is known that any snakes frequent the ruins of their dwellings. These house-snakes grow to a large size, and are said to be quite harmless, and even tame."

In India, the "samp-wallah" is less blood-thirsty in his operations against the crawling race, contenting himself with making them his captives, instead of de-

vouring them. When a snake has been traced on the premises, it is a common custom to send for the "snake-catcher," who arrives with his numerous baskets, containing live snakes of various descriptions, and the uncouth musical instruments with which he enacteth the part of the "charmer," to whom the cobra-capello in this case seldom "turneth a deaf ear;" and by whatever means he effects his object, in a short time, after being lured from its hiding-place and deprived of its fangs, is snugly deposited at the bottom of one of the round wicker baskets which he carries about with him, and which, when not called on in his *professional* capacity, are displayed for the amusement of the spectator.

The snake-catcher seats himself on the ground, surrounded by these little baskets, and begins to drone forth a melancholy monotonous tune on a sort of bag-pipe.

After a short time, the covers of the baskets are removed, and display in each the scaly folds of a cobra-capello compactly coiled up in the bottom, and apparently intently listening to the music, if such it can be called. By degrees, they appear to grow animated; they gradually raise their heads, expand their hoods, and, by a sort of nodding motion, seem to keep time to the music; and it is fearful to behold the "charmer," surrounded on all sides by these terrific-looking animals, and, although in their present state perfectly harmless, from being divested of their fangs, a thrill of horror involuntarily creeps through the veins of the spectator.

A dreadful commotion now takes place if a mongoos* be quietly slipped into the

* This animal is of the same species as the far-famed ichneumon of the Egyptians, the destroyer of the crocodile. In India it manifests the greatest

room; the little animal instantly flies at its nearest enemy, a terrible combat ensues, the baskets are upset, the cobras get adrift, and the agonized "samp-wallah" is flying about in every direction to secure his captives.

These people generally have for sale numbers of "snake-stones," which are said to be equally an antidote against the bite of the serpent and the sting of the scorpion. For the former I have never seen it tried; and to prove its efficacy with the latter, the samp-wallah generally

antipathy towards all the serpent tribe, which, no matter of what size or how venemous, it invariably attacks. The most obstinate combats frequently take place between the cobra-capello and this little animal, which always endeavours to seize its adversary by the back of the head: in doing so, it is often exposed to its poisonous fangs, whose deadly effects it has, however, the power to avert, by immediately eating of some herb which acts as an antidote. What this is, has never yet been found out.

carries about in small earthen vessels a number of these animals, one of which he allows to wound him with his sting. The snake-stone, which is a dark, shining, smooth pebble, about the size and shape of a French bean, on being applied to the wound, instantly adheres to it, and by a power of suction appears to draw out the poison, which is supposed to be contained in the small bubbles which, on the immersion of the stone into a glass of water, are seen in great numbers to rise to the surface.

My first idea on beholding the "samp-wallah" allow himself to be stung by the scorpion was that the latter had by some means been rendered harmless. However, not wishing voluntarily to put this to the test by personal experience, I purchased some of the stones, resolved on the very first opportunity to try their efficacy. Shortly after this, happening to be march-

ing up the country with a detachment, we pitched our camp on some very stony ground, in clearing which one of the English soldiers happened to be bit in the hand by a large scorpion. As soon as I heard of the circumstance, I sent for the sufferer, who appeared to be in great pain, which he described as a burning sensation running all the way up his arm to the very shoulder.

I applied one of the snake stones to the puncture; it adhered immediately, and during about eight minutes it remained on the patient he by degrees became easier; the pain diminished, gradually coming down from the shoulder, until it appeared entirely confined to the immediate vicinity of the wound. I now removed the stone; on putting it into a cup of water, numbers of small air bubbles rose to the surface, and in a short time the man ceased to suffer any inconvenience from the accident.

One of my snake-catching friends at Milapoor could produce, besides the usual assortment of *dancing* cobras, every other delicacy of the season in the serpent department. His "carpet snakes"* were in good condition; he had some fine, fierce-looking, bright green "eye-snakes;" and some charming young boas, which, although he assured me were mere "pups," measured about fifteen feet in length, and were as thick as the arm of the stoutest man. For a couple of rupees I was tempted to purchase one of these monsters, which to the most brilliant colours added a perfectly docile and amiable dis-

* So called from being often found concealed under the matting of the bungalows. This little animal is said to be extremely venemous. The eye-snake has already been mentioned; it is of a bright green colour, with a head formed like that of the hawk's-bill turtle, and when irritated has a most formidable appearance, but I believe is in reality harmless, having been bitten once, as before described, by one, without experiencing any evil effects.

position, and coiling its knotty folds round my neck and body, frequently, to the astonishment of the beholder, enabled me to enact a very good fac-simile of Laocoon It was, however, never so warm in its embrace but that I could always remove it at will, and place it in its basket, where for days and weeks it would lie rolled up, unmolesting and unmolested. I generally fed it about once a fortnight with a few pounds of raw meat, which however it would never take of its own accord; I was obliged to keep open the mouth with a transverse stick, whilst I forced the victuals down its gullet, from whence they gradually passed into the stomach. This pet monster I kept for several months, until at last it died of cold at the Cape of Good Hope.

Altogether in India, at least in that part I have visited, the number of snakes is by no means so great as is generally sup-

posed. On putting his foot ashore in a tropical region, the new comer expects at every step he takes to tread on some venemous creature; but although the life I for many years led in the Deccan, and which, from constantly being in the jungles, would have tended to bring me into contact with these, as well as other inhabitants of the wilderness, in the course of my peregrinations I did not often meet them, and though I have on one or two occasions had rather narrow escapes, I never either suffered myself, nor did I ever hear of an accident occurring to others.

I remember, on one occasion, whilst seated in my verandah, a corporal was approaching with the orderly book. The man's attention was occupied by turning over the leaves as he advanced, to find out the orders of the day. Happening to glance my eyes towards him, I with hor-

ror beheld a large cobra-capello issuing from some grass, and slowly crossing the soldier's path. Another unconscious step would have placed the reptile under his feet. I roared out a thundering '*halt.*" It had the desired effect: the corporal stood bolt upright at the position of "attention," nor till I pointed to the ground was he aware of the danger he had escaped. The cobra was pursued, and, as usual, easily destroyed; as, when pressed, he invariably coils himself up, and expanding his hood throws himself into an attitude of defence by raising his head about eighteen inches above the ground, and in this position, awaiting his adversary, presents a fair mark either to a stout stick or sharp sword, with which I have before now sent the head flying from the writhing folds of its tortuous body.

It is generally after heavy rains that they are mostly to be met with, being

driven out of their recesses by the water.

I remember one evening riding out with a friend during the monsoon, when we were attracted to a spot amongst some rocks by the continued and violent barking of a favourite little spaniel belonging to my companion, and, on approaching, found it to be caused by a cobra-capello, who, with elevated neck, distended hood, and uttering a fearful hissing noise, was every now and then darting his head, open-mouthed, towards the dog, who continued often approaching fearfully near, to bay his deadly opponent. We lost no time, as may be imagined, in rescuing my friend's favourite from his threatened danger; a horse-keeper was at hand with a loaded fowling-piece, with which the cowled monster was in an instant despatched.

But a truce to my adventures by "flood

and field." The time of embarkation at length arrived, and as the Massulah boat bore me on high over the mountain surf, I felt a pang of sincere regret on leaving the sunny shores and stanch friends, the theatre and companions of most of the "Scenes and Sports in Foreign Lands."

APPENDIX:

BEING

A FEW HINTS FOR THE CONDUCT AND GUIDANCE OF A "YOUNG HAND" FIRST ENTERING ON "SCENES AND SPORTS IN FOREIGN LANDS."

MANY will, no doubt, be found to reprobate the tendency which the perusal of the foregoing pages *may* have in turning the ideas and pursuits of the "young Indian" into a sporting channel, and, as has been alleged of "Jack Sheppard" and "Tom and Jerry," causing the young idea to "shoot" off at a tangent from more useful occupations.

That such may be found I will not attempt to deny, or that the too eager pursuits of field sports under a tropical sun

has often caused illness and shortened the career of numbers of its votaries. Still I maintain that this pursuit, with all its inconveniences, has many redeeming points and counterbalancing advantages.

In the first place it puts a stop to that indolence and listless apathy a young man is so apt to give way to on his first arrival in the country, a state from which he often only finds relief by having recourse to the brandy-bottle, the dice-box, or billiard-table; that is, always supposing him to possess few internal resources of his own. And, alas! how many are there who, at the early age in which they often visit these burning climes, are sadly devoid of these qualifications; or, if perchance gifted with a classical education, are so overjoyed at being freed from the thraldom of school, that they at once plunge into every excess,—eating and drinking immoderately being amongst the number.

Against *these* vices, the *real* and true sportsman will carefully be on his guard, and he is too well aware of the necessity of sobriety to ensure the steady hand and eagle glance on which his safety and very existence in many a perilous encounter so often depend; and of moderation in diet, to ensure the possession of the light; sinewy, and muscular form, capable of enduring the utmost fatigue, to give way to either excess, and thus strike at the very fountain-heads of his capability of following up his favourite pursuits.

Ye votaries of Diana and followers of Nimrod in the wide plains of Hindostan, if ye wish for the glory of meeting face to face and on foot the grim tenants of its jungly wilds, when one untimely pulsation of the wrist may, by causing the muzzle of your rifle to swerve from its true direction, place you within the jaws of destruction and the spring of death,

avoid the brandy-flask, deep potations of the potent Hodgson, or repeated libations to the rosy god!

If ye wish your hardened bodies to stand under the lengthened fatigues of a broiling mid-day sun; the sinewy leg to bear ye up the steep and uneven face of rocks and crags, over the broad surface of the open meidan, or through the dense and thorny jungle; the muscular arm, to carry without drooping the heavy rifle or ponderous boar-spear, from the rising of the sun to the down-setting of the same, avoid, as ye would pestilence, death, or famine—eschew, I say, the luscious tiffin, the *heavy* dinner, and the devilled supper.*

* There cannot be a more mistaken idea than that large quantities of animal food are requisite in order to enable the support of great fatigue. The author, in some of the severest fagging he ever went through during his excursions into the "deep jungle," lived principally on a rice diet. He has always found the best beverage for hard work to be *very*

Let your fare be simple and wholesome, and, above all, let *moderation* be the ruler of every appetite.

We have thus shewn *moderation* to be a vital requisite of the Indian sportsman, whose vocation is also attended by many other desirable qualifications. His pursuits lead him to a constant intercourse with the Natives, whose different dialects he will therefore endeavour to cultivate; and during the still and burning hours of noon, whilst his tent is pitched in some

weak brandy-and-water. A grateful drink, after enduring great fatigue, and one which is not generally known, may be made with a mixture of milk and water, in which has been thrown about half a teaspoonful of salt. When actually at work in the sun, an indulgence in drink only promotes a greater wish for more liquor; and the parched sensation of the throat and mouth may often be kept away by retaining a piece of grass or a straw in the latter, which promotes the action of the saliva, and renders an application to the brandy-pawnee flask unnecessary.

shady and romantic spot, if possessed of a turn for drawing, he will attempt to delineate roughly the often interesting and picturesque scenes around him, thereby affording subjects for occupation on his return to head-quarters. His horses and dogs, the nature of the wild animals he has been in the habit of meeting with in the jungles, together with the trees and plants peculiar to the wilderness, will also supply him with materials for study and observation, which he may embody in the shape of notes and memoranda. All this will greatly tend to remove those indolent habits, the bane of an Indian life, and the precursors of every kind of dissipation.

With all these advantages attending a sportsman's career, it cannot be denied that he will have sometimes to look on the dark side of the question, particularly when an immoderate fondness of these

pursuits urges the thoughtless youth to attempt what is far beyond his strength and powers of endurance. By the exposure of his *unseasoned* person alternately to night damps and the burning rays of the sun, to the opposites of heat and cold, he frequently entails on himself diseases which, if not immediately fatal, often leave their marks for life.

Moderation again comes into play. Moderation—moderation—moderation, to the end of the verse and chapter.

On first arriving in the country, great caution ought to be observed by a youngster, not only in engaging in the sports of the field, but in his general mode of life, as, after the confinement consequent on a long voyage, during which he has probably lived freely, he lands with a full habit of body, and is therefore very liable to be attacked by fever of the most virulent description. Let him, therefore, keep as

much as possible out of the sun, take horse exercise in the cool of the morning and evening, and, above all things, avoid the excesses of the table.

Dysentery is another scourge to which the new comer is liable. Exposure to the sun will often bring on this; eating fruit, being out in the night dews, or remaining any length of time with wet feet; and no one who has not felt its baneful effects can sufficiently dread this afflicting malady. Fever and dysentery are therefore the two demons the "griff" has principally to guard against—the gouls which most frequently prey on the young and inexperienced.*

* I remember, in the beginning of 1827, starting from Poonamallee for Hyderabad, a distance of four hundred miles, with a hundred young recruits just arrived in the country. With the usual "prevoyance" displayed by the authorities in India, we were ordered to march before the end of the north-east monsoon, and were, consequently, for days exposed

The approaches of liver complaint are slower, more insidious, and generally the result of a long residence in a tropical climate.

The first year in the country is undoubtedly the most trying to the European constitution, and if it stands this *seasoning*, its possessor may hope, with prudence, to enjoy a long period of health. But, alas! how many constitutions succumb under this probationary twelvemonth?

Even after this critical period has elapsed, and in fact always during a resi-

to the rain. Every old campaigner is aware of the inconvenience suffered by a soldier, even in a healthy climate, during a march under these circumstances; but here they were attended with rather more serious consequences than mere inconvenience. Dysentery made its appearance in its most frightful shape; we buried several men on the line of march; and shortly after our arrival at head-quarters, as fine a detachment as ever left the shores of England, and which had reached Madras without the loss of a man, was thinned by the death of between twenty and thirty promising

dence in India, I would stick as nearly as possible to the above rules, which at times must however be necessarily broken through, particularly by the thoughtless impetuosity of youth, and this not always with impunity.

What greatly operates against my favourite precept of "moderation" is the pernicious habit introduced at many of the military messes, particularly in the Company's service, of dining in the middle of the day.

The officers' bungalows are generally at

young soldiers, whose untimely fate might probably have been averted by allowing them (there being no perceptible cause for hurry) to await for a fortnight longer in barracks the return of the dry season. Such is, however, the case; and it will be admitted by all who have campaigned in India, that troops are marched about at the most unseasonable times, without any regard to the inconveniences they are thereby frequently exposed to, and the often consequent waste of human life—thus wantonly sacrificed.

some distance from the mess-house, where they arrive at this ungodly, not to say *infernally* hot hour, steaming with heat and perspiration. This pleasant state of things is not diminished by the fumes of the hot dishes smoking on the table, as if ashamed not to be in keeping and character with the general temperature of the scene. When a man suffers from an unusual state of caloric, he generally feels a proportionate degree of thirst, to alleviate which is requisite a due quantum of liquid. Beer, or rather strong ale, (Hodgson's all potent "pale,") is on such occasions eagerly imbibed, followed, maybe, by powerful potations of Madeira or claret; and the partakers of these mid-day feasts often rise, at the conclusion of their meal, with steps evidently unsteady, and countenance markedly flushed — a state of things bad enough when only an evening ride is in contemplation, but, to say the

least, highly reprehensible when an afternoon parade exposes an officer thus circumstanced to the critical remarks of his men; and no class of people possess a keener sense of observation than soldiers.

We will, however, suppose that our three o'clock man has terminated his ride or parade without either killing a native or clubbing his company. How is he now to spend his evening? It will be answered, let reading occupy the intervening hours till bed-time. But, alas! how few, after the excitement they have recently gone through, can retire to the solitude of their own chamber, and thus rationally occupy themselves. No! the usual system is to have a general rendezvous at the quarters of a brother officer. Cards, cheroots, and "brandy-pawnee" are introduced; and the dawn of day frequently discloses a scene of gambling and

debauchery, a long list of heavy losses or severe head-aches.

So much for three o'clock dinners; turn we now to the more rational hour of seven. After the *gun-fire** morning ride or parade, bath, and breakfast, the occupations of the day may be said to commence, and can always be varied by reading, drawing, writing, or the study of the native languages. About two o'clock, a glass of wine and a sandwich or biscuit serve merely to stop the opening chinks of hunger, without destroying the appetite for dinner. Should you feel sufficiently refreshed, your studies may be resumed; or, if the weather be unusually hot, or a feeling of languor oppress you, a "siesta"

* In all military cantonments a gun is fired at the first dawn of day, and this within the tropics is the signal for a general "turn out," when advantage is taken of the coolness of the "young morn" either for exercise or business.

of a couple of hours might be advisable; from which you rise, dress, and, mounting your little Arab, take a pleasant ride in the freshness of the evening.

The first bugle for dinner sounds at half-past six: you dismount, take a bath, and go cool and comfortable to the mess-house, where, after a *moderate* repast, with agreeable conversation, the perfumed aroma of the hookah, and a few glasses of cold saltpetred claret, you pleasantly and rationally spend the time until the hour of ten warns you to early repose, ready to rise fresh and invigorated with the dawn of the following day.

Another excess, more difficult to be resisted by the keen sportsman than any of the former, is that constant exposure to the sun which, sooner or later, undermines the most iron frames; and this more particularly in that (after hog-hunting) most fascinating of Indian sports, snipe-shoot-

ing. Here fire and water both combine to wear away the constitution ; for whilst the upper man is exposed to the powerful rays of an often vertical sun, the nether parts are immersed in mud and water ; and the most provoking circumstance is, that the hotter the day the more chance there is of a heavy bag, as the birds, during the excessive heat of noon, will almost allow themselves to be kicked up by the sportsman ; and when they do rise, lob heavily along, affording an easy shot even to the most unpractised hand ; whereas, in the cool of the morning, they are wild, rise at long distances, and are exceedingly baffling by their rapid flight. We have ere now often started off to the snipe-ground in the morning with the laudable determination of returning by breakfast-time, when, as the heat increased, the strong inducement of additional sport has often detained us, until

we had to press hard our stanch little Mahratta pony, in order to return in time for a seven o'clock dinner.

One of the best snipe shots I ever met with, and, in fact, a first-rate shot of every description, was our old commandant, Colonel C——, and he was the only one I ever saw possessed of sufficient resolution to leave his sport, mount his horse, and return home, ere the sun's rays had become injurious; and many is the lecture we have received from him on our imprudence and want of self-denial.

The old gentleman used always to go out provided with a dry change of shoes, worsted stockings, and flannel drawers; when, after finishing his morning's work he would hastily remove his wet things, and, mounting his horse, gallop back to his tent or quarters. Many were the arguments he made use of to induce us to follow his example, and ridicule was

amongst the number of weapons so employed. "Any man," he would say, "with the slightest pretension to the name of a sportsman, ought to be ashamed to fire at birds it is impossible to miss. I would as soon think of knocking over cocks and hens in a barn yard, or of taking a shot at an antelope standing still—'tis most unsportsmanlike." And he used to make good his words, for seldom lived either the snipe or antelope to tell the tale that the Colonel had pulled trigger on them. But from his youth, in his native highlands, he had been accustomed to stalk the red deer, and to every other sport of those mountain regions, and 'tis not to be wondered at if he was one of the best shots I ever beheld. His nephew, who was also a brother sportsman and officer, equalled him with the rifle. I have seen him, as a flock of antelopes were bounding past us, as if on the wings of

the wind, coolly select the finest buck in the herd, the trigger was pulled, one upward bound was perceived, and the victim was left behind by his flying mates, weltering in gore, from the unerring shot either in the head or shoulder.

J. C—— was my constant companion in the chase. He was, however, promoted at last out of the regiment. On putting together for publication the foregoing leaves, I wrote, requesting he would supply me with any stray reminiscences he might have of our common adventures in days by-gone. In reply to my communication, I received the following mems., which, with many thanks to the author, I subjoin.

Letter to Captain C——, —th regiment

My dear C.—In reply to your queries touching the history of the "boat," I believe, as far as I can recollect, it to be as follows:—The idea of the vehicle, vessel, or whatever you please to denominate it, so yclept "par excellence," took its rise from Morland's "Black Joke," in which we had been buffetted about by the waves on the bosom of the Perkhal Lake. The thought came, I remember, very *apropos* I was, as we all often were, very hard up; duns were troublesome; even old Bomanjee began to look grave at my repeated delays of promised payment. At last, I believe, more than anything else, to restore the wonted smile to the old sinner's jolly countenance, I offered to let him have my "bang up" new buggy in a bargain, a *swop*, if I remember right, of a rifle, the

sum I was in his debt, and something to boot. Old B——, as you know, was always wide awake; he jumped at my offer, and we concluded the bargain, on condition that he would throw into the scale the shafts, frame-work, and wheels, the remains of an old bandy which had long decorated his variously assorted compound. "Done and done" was the word, but old Bomanjee could not imagine what I wanted with this primitive ground-work of his Homerian car.

I immediately set to work: a blacksmith and carpenter soon made the ricketty old shafts and wheels fit for any work. A basket maker was sent for, and with flat slips of bamboo constructed a square machine, with sides about two feet high, and of the breadth and length of the old frame, which you must know was one of those fitted with springs to the axle-tree. Now came the turn of the chuckler and

moochee mat; the former securely fastened over the bamboo shell, tough bullock hides, which the latter duly anointing with a mixture of tar and paint, rendered impervious to the watery element. So much for the hull of the ark. My attention was now directed to the rigging; four upright poles of bamboo supported a canvass awning; two of the former being provided with a rounded piece of board fastened to one end, served in their nautical capacity as paddles; the two remaining ones being joined together made a capital mast, to which the above-mentioned awning was to serve as a mainsail.

My whole naval architecture was completed in a much shorter time than anything Symonds ever sent off the slips. I think it might be three or four days on the outside, when, impatient of further delay, I strapped on "the boat," and with another harum-scarum fellow proudly

drove down to the spot near the Houssain Sangur tank where the bands frequently met in the evening, and which was therefore the resort of all the gay and fashionable world of Secunderabad and the Residency, to say nothing occasionally of that of Bolarum and Boampilly.

With far less exultation did Ulysses and Diomed conduct the car of the Thracian prince back to the camp, than I, with every bit of steam on my fast trotting nag "Spitfire," rattled down the road, and drew up in the circle of fashionables.

But, ye gods! how they did stare! The unexpected apparition for sometime deprived them of utterance, but at last burst forth one universal roar, and I was overwhelmed with questions as to the use and end of this wonderful looking machine. "I'll shew you all," said I, "if you'll come to the 'tank,'" which you may remember was close by. It was no

easy job to keep alongside of Spitfire when once he got his full swing in the shafts; with the present light weight behind him he "ate space by the furlong;" we soon distanced the numerous cavalcade, or rather "buggade," which followed in our wake, backed into the tank, cast our moorings adrift, hoisted our sail, and were soon running before a fine northerly breeze (which, fortunately for our square-rigged and square-built craft, was right aft) over the slightly troubled waters of the noble Houssain Sangur.

Our horse and wheels we had on embarkation sent to the further end of the "bund," about a mile and a half distant, there to await our arrival; and, running along parallel to that magnificent embankment, on the road at the summit of which followed a number of spectators, we were safely landed beneath the guard-house at the opposite side, almost at the

same moment that Chennoo conducted thither his charge.

The success of the undertaking had been complete, and Spitfire carried us back in triumph, with many "bloody" anticipations floating on our minds of future havoc, through the medium of "the boat," amongst every flock of teal, widgeon, or water-fowl of all kinds, sorts, or descriptions, within fifty miles of the cantonment.

On a subsequent attempt to navigate the Houssain Sangur, in company with G——, I nearly made a mull of the business. By some untoward accident we sprung a leak; baling was no go; we were in a deep part of the tank, and about half a mile from the shore, the water fast gaining on us; and poor G—— could not swim. He, of course, under these circumstances, was in rather an unpleasant state of nervous excitement; at last, rest-

ing on his oar, and looking in a most doleful manner at the increase of water in the "hold," he exclaimed, in tones of the deepest dejection, "We can't float much longer; but Nap, don't you think you can save me?" "Save *you!* no, not I, man! I shall have the greatest difficulty in getting myself to the shore, supposing always that an alligator does not lay hold of me on the way! But pull away, man! your only chance is to pull for your life." And accordingly we *did* pull—ay, like dray horses—and just succeeded, much to G——'s satisfaction and my own also, in running our craft into shoal water as she was settling down with Cæsar and his fortunes.

But the most adventurous expedition in which I was ever engaged in the boat was with Lacy, during the monsoon of 183—, on the then swollen and angry waters of the Moussa, which, from the mere brook

it was in the dry season, now roared furiously past the walls of the city, brimful from bank to bank, and nearly a quarter of a mile across. It was whilst the river was in this state, the only one, by the bye, in which its waters were at all navigable, that we determined on exploring its course between Hyderabad and Oopul. We started on a Monday morning, attended one of the public breakfasts at the Residency, where the Lady Resident, Mrs. S——, or, as we used to call her, "the Queen," and her amiable daughter "the Princess," always made themselves so agreeable, beat up Dr. V——'s quarters, in whose stables I remember seeing a strange medley of wounded men of five or six different nations,* the result of one of

* On this occasion we remember seeing amongst the sufferers, an Arab, a Seik, a couple of Ethiopians, and a Turk, rather a strange medley of different ingredients for an hospital.

the frequent conflicts in the city; and afterwards driving down to Chuderghaut, launched our frail bark on the turbid waters, and rapidly shot down the stream, along the centre of which we at first smoothly glided, much pleased with so favourable an onset.

Our navigation for a considerable time continued prosperous; the day, cool and cloudy, rendered the trip at first delightful. We had sent our guns and refreshments on to Oopul, and anticipated a little rock-pigeon shooting at the end of our voyage of discovery. Things, however, soon took another turn; the increasing number of eddies, and the rapidity with which we were now carried along, warned us to "look out for squalls;" but it was too late. "Breakers" were discovered ahead, in the shape of a regular waterfall, towards which we were now rapidly and unavoidably drawing near, as we perceived, to our dis-

may, that we had fairly got into the eddying rapids, which were evidently carrying us along with them in their mad career towards the dreaded cataract. A council of war was instantly held, which was considerably shortened by the increasing din of the falling waters. We were both expert swimmers, and at first the thought struck us of abandoning our already unmanageable skiff, jumping overboard, and endeavouring to stem the rapid current. We, however, were convinced that this would be a useless endeavour, and only lead to certain destruction. We determined therefore, "*coute qui coute*," to stick to the last by the "ship," which was now careering furiously along amidst the boiling waters. We appeared on the verge of destruction, when, on the very edge of the cataract we perceived a large rock, on which we managed to steer, and, thanks to the elastic nature of our canoe,

were driven high and dry up its shelving side. We were here in temporary safety, but our situation was far from pleasant, as the question was how we were to reach *terra firma*. From this dilemma we were removed by finding that a sand-bank ran from the foot of the rock on which we poor shipwrecked mariners disconsolately stood, and continued to some extent up the river; we therefore took our vessel in tow, and, wading breast high for a considerable way on the shoal, at last arrived at such a distance from the fall, that, with a clear offing, we made a start for the nearest bank, which we reached very much in the state of a couple of drowned rats, and had to walk from our landing place, which was somewhere above the Tiger Rock, in this dripping state, back to the cantonment, a distance of about five miles.

Apropos of the "Tiger Rock;" are you

aware whence it derived its imposing nomenclature? Of course you remember the spot, so often the scene of our joint shooting rambles. Methinks I see at this moment its black and bare surface abruptly rising out of the sea of the waving custard-apple bushes, and of the long grass which in the cool season surrounded its base. Then ascending amidst the huge fragments of granite of which it was composed, how frequently have we been startled by the large bats, or yellow hooded owl, flitting in alarm from amidst the deep fissures, from whence often arose the rank and unpleasant smell which you must remember, so peculiar to those localities frequented by beasts of prey. How often have we been induced, by coming on their recent traces, and falling in with numerous porcupine quills scattered over those arid and broken rocks, to watch through the fine moonlight nights of the

hot season, (but, if I remember right, always here without success,) in hopes of getting a shot at some animal or other, and as often have turned away at the dawn of day, sickened and disgusted by our failure. That there was "sheekar" on that rock I am certain, and the only reason of our never having been able to stumble on them must have been owing to the numerous and deep fissures, which afforded such secure places of retreat. Although I have often killed antelope in the large mangoe tope, near the little serai in its vicinity, I think my sporting exploits on the rock were limited, during all my numerous visits to it, to the destruction of a single jungle cat, a "big one," 'tis true, which I suddenly came across as I was shooting quail up its sides, and knocked over with a charge of dust shot.

But to the tiger story, which happened

when you were absent, I think, at Masulipatam, and which at the time caused a good deal of talk. W——, with three or four other fellows, happened to ride out early one morning with their greyhounds for the chance of a brush, when, on turning a large ledge of rock, rather an appalling sight presented itself, in the shape of a noble royal tiger in the act of tearing a freshly killed antelope. It is rather dangerous to interrupt royalty at an early breakfast; there was, besides, not a "bundook" in the whole party, and there they stood for some seconds eyeing each other, at the distance of some forty or fifty yards, when the tiger sulkily left his prey, and retired slowly into one of the large fissures which happened to be near. To follow him thither without arms would have been madness; a horse-keeper was therefore perched in one of the neighbouring mangoe trees to watch the movements of the

beast, and the party galloped into cantonments for their rifles, with the wonderful intelligence, which speedily brought out every sportsman in the place. The rock was regularly invested, and explored day and night in every direction, but still no tiger was to be seen, or has ever since been forthcoming; and to this day his disappearance and escape from this isolated rock, and across the open plain which for miles surrounds it, has never been accounted for.

I quite forget how I got the "boat" home from the edge of the river where we stranded it. It afterwards passed into the possession of that mad fellow R——, of the —th N. I., who used to drive across country with it sometimes tandem, sometimes unicorn, and generally with some unbroken runaway devil of a horse, and frequently returned in it from his poaching excursions to the Rumnah, with

the additional freight of three or four slain antelopes.

I have nearly concluded my "Scenes and Sports." How do you like what you have seen of them? Though rough, they are correct accounts of our adventures, as far as recollection serves me, which, by the bye, you might give a lift to, by letting me have, to refresh my memory, any stray reminiscences which may occur to you of those pleasant by-gone times. I know that in this you will oblige yours most truly,

E. N.

DEAR N——, many thanks for your notices about the "boat;" and in compliance with the latter part of your communication, I send you the following "mems." of sporting reminiscences. I have written them down without method or arrangement, and you have them as they occurred to me in their present rude and undigested state.

Ever truly yours,

J. C.

Winchester,
8th August, 1840.

SPORTING MEMORANDA.

We had made an arrangement for going out to shoot at the Oopul river; you were prevented from coming that morning, as had been agreed on. My tent had not been long pitched when Coolendur (you must surely remember the bandy-legged horse-keeper) came running in to say that there was a large snake in a hole near the horses' heads. I took my gun, which was loaded with small shot, and followed him. He pointed into a hole close to old Jerry's head-ropes, and on looking in I observed two coils of a very large snake. The den selected by the animal appeared to have been hollowed out by white ants. I put the gun close up, and fired: we could not get the dead snake out until we had turned up a good deal of earth; and on your

arrival in the evening, I had him twisted round one of the sloping ropes of the tent near the entrance. He was a grey snake, and I think about my own length.

Snakes constantly make use of the deserted nest of the white ant as a retreat: you must have frequently seen them enter these holes. The one I have mentioned had coiled himself round, so that two portions of his body were visible at once. You can scarcely have forgotten the cool *glassy* look a snake always has, let the weather be ever so dry and hot.

I recollect on this occasion having suspended, all round the tent, snipes, partridges, &c., as a sort of bravado to make you regret that you had not come out in the morning, and to punish you for making me pass my day in solitude. You remember the dead stillness of an Indian day—not a leaf moving nor a sound heard, except the melancholy cooing of the dove,

and the peculiar call of the fellows who are perched in trees to watch the goats and cattle.

Do you remember a cheetah at Mowlh-Ali one morning looking out for Bumper, the colonel's old liver-and-white pointer, when you went up the rock to shoot it, but it had got into its den before you could get to it? This will prove the important fact, that tigers have a predilection for breakfasting on liver-and-white pointers, and abominate the sight of hair-brained subs and double-barrels.

I recollect once at Surroo-Nuggur firing at a very fine black buck. I could see that I had hit him too far back, judging from his pace after I had fired. When a deer is hit, if close to you, you can always perceive a sort of shivering tremour and uncertainty in his pace, quite different

from the decided firm and measured bound of a sound one. The one I fired at gave all the signs which, to a practised deer-stalker, are conclusive of a hit long before the black spot is seen, which is only after the blood has had time to stain the hair about the place; and before *that* is the case a deer sometimes gets over a good deal of ground. I was resolved to secure him, if possible, with the second barrel, and applied the necessary pressure to the trigger, when I perceived the head of a man (almost in the direct line, and about eighty yards beyond my object) protruded over one of those large stones you have often seen about the ruins, surrounded by custard-apple bushes. I saw this in time enough to make my shot a bad one, but not to prevent its going off. I saw the dust fly from the stone, the head vanished, and the antelope passed on, not more alarmed, I am sure, than I was at that

moment. I ran up, pretty certain that I had killed some *native*, and was much relieved on getting to the spot to find a fellow shrivelled up into as small a space as his dimensions would admit of, with his knees up to his chin, and sitting on his heels. You recollect the attitude. He looked as if he was mentally ejaculating, "There may be more where that came from!" and when he saw me, I really think my excited look made him conjecture that, having missed his head, I had come up to give him the finishing stroke with the butt-end: he must have thought it was *all but*. He had occasioned me so much alarm, that I really felt for the moment quite angry, and very likely told him my mind in pure Billingsgate, which I daresay did not hurt his feelings materially. I left *him* to follow up the antelope, which soon fell; and I daresay, if he is now alive, he sometimes congratu-

lates himself on his escape from the *Feringee* madman, as there was no time for explanations by signs, and no interpreter nearer than Joe Edmonds' bungalow.

I never shot more than five hares in a day, and that was at the place you mention, beyond Mowhl-Ali. I came upon them accidentally whilst following a wounded snipe. I never in India saw a hare on her form as you so often do in this country. This may have been owing to the sort of ground we found them in. They always frequented parts of the jungle where the soil was sandy and almost the colour of their fur, without grass, and here and there patches of a kind of stunted black-thorn. They were covered generally with vermin, which was probably the cause of thus selecting the bare ground as a bed, in preference to places where there

was much herbage to harbour insects. Most game birds, as well as hares, are fond of black-thorn, which protects them from hawks and other birds of prey. The hare in India has saved the life of many people. I have read, in accounts of the Thugs, of these miscreants abandoning one of their bloody enterprises, in consequence of a hare passing them on the side which, by their superstition, was considered unpropitious. I do not know whether they are mingled in any way with the superstitious observances of the other natives of India. In Scotland, witches are supposed constantly to assume the form of hares when about to execute any of their devil's work. Walter Scott frequently mentions this. I recollect, when going down to Madras with G—— and H——, at a place two marches on the Secunderabad side of the Kishna, a hare that was disturbed by some husbandmen

making a dash into our little camp, and occasioning quite an uproar. The poor animal became perfectly confused with the novelty of her situation, and ran the gauntlet amidst showers of tent-pegs, momties, &c. H——was a great proficient in pistol-shooting; he used to keep a pair always loaded, with which we demolished the empty bottles after their contents had made our hands steady. I recollect his pointing out one of them with a cracked stock as that which F—— of the —— had in his hand at the time he was shot by * * * * * * * of the ——. On the present occasion he run out with one in each hand, and as poor puss passed our tent the ball went so near her that I saw the sand dashed up close under her legs. When she had escaped this danger she was nearly on the outskirts of the camp; but, as if ambitious of becoming a curry, she made direct for

some fellows who were cooking under a tree, and one of them seized a piece of fire-wood, which he aimed so well that we saw the poor hare bundled over, and carried off to be dressed for tiffin. The Indian does not run near so swiftly as our own hare, and scarcely ever makes her escape even from the inferior description of greyhound there.

I remember having a very narrow escape* from one of the largest snakes of the cobra kind I ever met with, whilst shooting hares with poor old Radford. We were moving parallel through some low brush-

* This recalls to mind a still more narrow escape of Lieutenant O——, of the 19th Regiment of Native Infantry. He was having some repairs done to his bungalow, and was lying, only dressed in his long drawers and shirt, reading on a mattress in his verandah. He went to sleep, and was awakened by a cold and chilly sensation about his breast; he opened his eyes, when, to his horror, he perceived, coiled round in a circle, and "nestling in his bosom," a large cobra capello. To have moved or even

wood; a hare started near Radford, and I was running on in hopes of finding an open space to get a shot, when he fired and knocked him over. I halted, and perceived on the ground, a few feet in front, the snake with its hood up, and quite prepared for a dart. I shot it; but if the hare had not been killed at the moment she was, I certainly must have put my foot on it. I lived in the next house to the 52nd mess at Secunderabad. I heard one afternoon a good deal of talking, and a little afterwards a gun was discharged. I ran out to see what it was all

spoke would have been death; he retained his presence of mind sufficiently to remain perfectly still, with his downcast eyes fixed on the glossy surface of the reptile. In this unpleasant position he stopped a considerable time, until the snake, disturbed by the approach of one of the workmen, left its snug berth, and was gliding off, when the servants, alarmed by the cries of the man who had first seen it, approached and put it to death.—*Note by the Author.*

about, and found that some of the servants had seen a large rock-snake in the milk-hedge; that Bower had sent for his gun, and shot it; and on its being dragged out it was found to have a mongoose half-down its throat, with the tail part and hind legs sticking out at its mouth, (a case of the biter bit.) I fancy you must have often seen the snake; it was stuffed at Bower's house, with the mongoose in the same position in which it was killed.

If you have described one day's snipe shooting in India, you have related all, I think, that can be said on the subject. It is a sport where there is no variety, except in the number of birds killed. I never had what was considered a really good day. The nearest approach I ever made to it was at a place in the direction of the horse artillery lines, about seven-

teen miles from Secunderabad, and a long way beyond the Houssain Sangur tank. I kept a Lascar constantly in my employ, who had directions to explore the country within thirty miles of the cantonment, and whenever he fell in with an extraordinary number of snipes or other game, he had instructions to return at once with his information, by following which I seldom failed in having a tolerable day's shooting. (I should recommend this plan to all snipe shooters.) Before I commenced it, how often have I been disappointed, on getting to a place where I had seen numbers of snipe, to find all the water drained off, and not a bird to be found.

The Lascar came to me one afternoon, to say that in the morning early he had seen *plenty snipe*. I asked how many; he said *one tousand*. This exactness as to the numbers would have appeared to a

person unacquainted with the figurative style of blackey, as something very closely resembling a lie. I knew that Mr. Lushinur only meant there were snipe enough to keep me firing until the barrels were red-hot, if I could have loaded fast enough. I therefore took down his directions about the road, and ordered him to start very early on the following morning with my gun, and a cowry coolee to carry spare powder, shot, brandy, dry stockings, &c., and to wait for me at the place appointed. I sent on a horse half way, and after breakfasting at home to deceive the old Colonel (who was always much against exposure to the sun,) I started, and got on very well for the first stage. On changing my horse and mounting a fresh one, I lost my way, and it was not until after a good deal of twisting and countermarching in low jungle, that I found my nigger friends, reclining luxuriously in the shade of a ta-

marind tree. My first question was about the snipe ground, which the Lascar answered by pointing to an extensive grass marshy bottom near us. I soon had my gun charged, and strode off to the scene of action, in the expectation of a hot and bloody day, with Lushinur as rear guard. The cowrie cooly* had remained behind to defend the camp, and to keep wet cloths on the goglets and bottles. I entered the marsh at a tremendous pace, making the water fly up at every step. I felt a pull at my coat tails, which said, as plain as pull could do, that Mr. Lascar thought we were going too fast, and that the noise would put up more snipe at one time than was

* A cooly is employed to carry large bamboo baskets covered with leather, called "cowrie baskets," in which are generally stowed the crockery, &c., on a march or excursion. The "goglet" is a porous earthen jug for containing water, which, from evaporation, remains in the warmest weather delightfully cool.

at all necessary for a right and left shot. I then cocked both barrels, (a practice I have always followed, though not, I believe, strictly according to rule,) and stole along very quietly, all eyes and expectation; but not a snipe sprung. We then increased to quick time; still not a snipe; and when we had gone over nearly a mile of ground without seeing one, I halted, uncocked, faced to the right about, looked daggers at the Lascar, and ordered him to produce his *tousand* snipes immediately, or I would turn him off next day. He insisted that he had seen them there the preceding morning, and appeared so confident that I was induced to toil on; but all in vain. I returned to our tree, tired and disgusted. The cooly was sound asleep, and had allowed the cloths on the bottles to dry. I had just energy enough remaining to reward his diligence by a kick on the posteriors, and when he

jumped up, rubbing his eyes with one hand, and his nether parts with the other, (as I could not express my wishes in Hindostanee) I merely pointed to the goglet with one hand, and turned up the little finger of the other, with the thumb touching the lower lip, and the palm full to the front, as the manual and platoon book would say. The hint was understood, and in a second I was at full length on the grass, with a large tumbler of brandy and water in my hand. You must recollect, and so must every old Indian, the first glass of liquid after an exciting walk in a broiling sun. It is not gulped down as Englishmen drink a pot of porter. The enjoyment is too great to get over so rapidly; you allow it to trickle down the burning and parched throat in small quantities at once, and drain it to the last drop. It was after this approved manner that I disposed of the glass of grog I have mentioned, and

was brooding over my disappointment, when I observed the Lascar (who had taken himself off when the slumbers of the cooly were disturbed,) approaching with a broad grin on his countenance. He gave me to understand in his broken English, that the heat of the weather (it was the beginning of the hot season) had drawn all the snipe from the low ground to the shade of a few trees in some paddy fields near us. The brandy and water had done wonders for me; I felt as fresh as ever at the welcome intelligence. From the first tree we came to, up rose a regular cloud of snipe. I fired both barrels, and I suppose the direction was not very true, for only three birds fell. In this way we went from tree to tree; and when the snipe had dispersed, we found them in such numbers that I could not load fast enough, and was several times obliged to put water on my gun, which be-

came too hot for the hand. If we had found them earlier, I might have shot any quantity, but as it was getting late I was obliged to cease firing, having bagged twenty-seven couple and a half, which was the greatest number I ever shot at one time in India. I never saw the snipe under trees on any other occasion.* I once beheld a hawk stoop on a wounded snipe, and carry it off before it had touched the ground.

On another occasion I recollect firing at a Brahminee kite flying past with a bird in his talons, brought him down stone

* The author has, however, invariably observed that towards the end of the snipe season, at the commencement of the hot winds, snipe are more frequently met with on the borders of the surrounding jungle than in the swampy ground which at other periods is their general place of resort, and under these circumstances they are generally in capital condition—frequently almost *humps* of fat.

dead, and the bird flew off unhurt: it was one of the sandpiper tribe.

I remember once firing at an antelope, at about eighty yards off; the ball entered his shoulder and went out at the opposite flank. He ran up to the spot where I was standing, and fell dead at my feet. That was the only occasion on which I ever saw a deer do so. You recollect old J——, when he was half screwed, firing at a flock of antelope at an immense distance, and by chance killing one. I think you were of the party; it was returning from Surroo-Nuggur. You also recollect Langworth shooting a whole charge of quail shot into C——, who swore him to secrecy on the spot, whilst he was employed in picking out the grains with a pin. Langworth told it all the very first time they dined at mess together. You

might take the anecdote of Child and Joe as amusing. They went out to shoot for the pot: Joe saw a hen partridge and her young ones enjoying themselves in the dust, at the roots of a milk hedge. After a long consultation, it was agreed that Child was to be the executioner; he stole up close to the birds, and when they were huddled together he discharged the contents of a long single barrel into the bosom of this united family, from a distance of ten yards. He and Joe rushed in to secure the spoil, when they found the old hen dreadfully disfigured, and the young ones so completely shattered, that only a few bills and toes were forthcoming to mark the spot where this cruel murder took place. Joe always afterwards, in talking of shooting, used to say, "Indeed, Child is a splendid shot—very—indeed."

Lacy and Edmonds borrowed a pointer bitch of mine when they went to Masulipatam. On their return, one morning very early, before it was quite light, some animal crossed the road; the bitch gave chase, but never returned. They heard a squeak, and they suppose it must have been a dumulgundy (the large hyena) that carried her off.

If a painted partridge does not see you, you may fire away without causing him alarm. I recollect seeing one crowing on a stone; I fired, and missed three times with a rifle, and it was only when one ball out of three which I had put in for the fourth shot, struck the stone near it, that it flew away.

You doubtless remember the fagging work we used often to have in search of

those confounded porcupines, who, although we constantly came on their quills scattered amongst the rocks, never would shew their own "fretful" persons. The only instance I ever heard of one of these gentry being shot, was the one I myself "floored" at Goolencondah, when lying one moonlight night in wait for a bear. I dare say you recollect the circumstance of our having him dressed for dinner, and how palateable we found this bristly "quill driver."

Shortly after succeeding to the adjutantcy, the circumstance is still fresh in my memory of having one night taken up a post amidst that chaotic chain of rocks which runs behind the church at Secunderabad. I had during the day seen such numerous proofs of the place being much frequented by porcupines, that I laid to my soul the flattering unction of

being able to get a shot at one. My position was judiciously taken behind a large mass of granite, which commanded an open space, surrounded by an amphitheatre of rocks, and on which the moon was brightly shedding her silver beams.

It might have been midnight, when, after having been about a couple of hours in ambush, I heard a rustling sound amongst the dry grass, which caused me to crouch down still closer in my ambush. I was thus anxiously, and in breathless silence, awaiting my expected quarry, when, to my surprise, three soldiers of the regiment, abruptly turning a bluff rock, appeared full in view, bearing between them a large chatty, which, placing on the ground, in the open space above alluded to, they commenced emptying of its contents, that from the effects produced was evidently toddy. Whilst they were cracking their drunken jokes, I had some diffi-

culty to repress an inclination to rush from my place of concealment, and seize on the offenders, whom, by the light of the bright moon, I recognised as three of the greatest blackguards in the regiment. But considering discretion as the better part of valour, I remained quiet, when, having had their fill, they kicked the chatty to pieces, and took their departure amidst roars of laughter.

My evening vigils on this occasion were attended with their usual want of success, and next morning, on going to the orderly room in my official capacity, I recognised my three friends of the preceding night, who had been confined in the guard room, and brought up for being absent from their barracks. One of them, a plausible rogue, commenced trumping up a well concocted tale, which the commanding officer appeared disposed to believe, when I completely disconcerted the narrator

and his associates, by distinctly relating the " toddy scene" amongst the rocks. They were so confounded that they had not a word to say in reply, received the punishment they deserved, and are probably to this day ignorant of the manner in which I obtained such accurate information of their deeds of " darkness."

THE END.

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